THE NEW HUDSON SHAKESPEARE

Eleanor Wemyss Reid

VI L.

THE LIVES
OF THE NOBLE GRECIANS AND ROMANES, COMPARED

together by that graue learned Philoſopher and Hiſtoriographer, Plutarke of Chæronea:

Tranſlated out of Greeke into French by IAMES AMYOT, Abbot of Bellozane, Bishop of Auxerre, one of the Kings priuy counſel, and great Amner of Fraunce, and out of French into Englishe, by

Thomas North.

Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautroullier and Iohn VVight.

1579.

TITLE-PAGE OF NORTH'S PLUTARCH, FIRST EDITION

THE NEW HUDSON SHAKESPEARE

THE TRAGEDY OF CORIOLANUS

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
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PREFACE

The text of this edition of *Coriolanus* is based on a collation of the seventeenth century Folios, the Globe edition, the Cambridge (W. A. Wright) edition of 1891, and that of Delius (1882). As compared with the text of the earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare, it is conservative. Exclusive of changes in spelling, punctuation, and stage directions, very few emendations by eighteenth century and nineteenth century editors have been adopted; and these, with the more important variations from the First Folio, are indicated in the textual notes. These notes are printed immediately below the text, so that a reader or student may see at a glance the evidence in the case of a disputed reading, and have some definite understanding of the reasons for those differences in the text of Shakespeare which frequently surprise and very often annoy. Such an arrangement should be of special help in the case of plays universally read and frequently acted, as actors and interpreters seldom agree in adhering to one text. A consideration of the more poetical, or the more dramatically effective, of two variant readings will often lead to rich results in awakening a spirit of discriminating interpretation and in developing true creative criticism. In no sense is this a textual variorum edition. The variants given are only those of importance and high authority.

The spelling and the punctuation of the text are modern, except in the case of verb terminations in *-ed*, which, when the *e* is silent, are printed with the apostrophe in its place. This is the general usage in the First Folio. The important contractions in the First Folio which may indicate Elizabethan pronunciation ('i' th'' for 'in the,' 'pamp'red' for 'pamper'd,' for example) are also followed. Modern spelling has to a certain extent been adopted in the text variants, but the original spelling has been retained wherever its peculiarities have been the basis for important textual criticism and emendation.

With the exception of the position of the textual variants, the plan of this edition is similar to that of the old Hudson Shakespeare. It is impossible to specify the various instances of revision and rearrangement in the matter of the Introduction and the interpretative notes, but the endeavor has been to retain all that gave the old edition its unique place and to add the results of what seems vital and permanent in later inquiry and research. In this edition, as in the volumes of the series already published, the chapters entitled Sources, Date of Composition, Early Editions, Versification and Diction, Duration of Time, Dramatic Construction and Development with Analysis by Act and Scene, and Stage History are wholly new. In this edition, too, is introduced a chronological chart, covering the important events of Shakespeare's life as man and as author and indicating in parallel columns his relation to contemporary writers and events. As a guide to reading clubs and literary societies, there has been appended to the Introduction a table of the distribution of characters in the play, giving the acts and scenes in which each character appears and the number of lines spoken by each. The index of words and phrases has been so arranged as to serve both

as a glossary and as a guide to the more important grammatical differences between Elizabethan and modern English.

While it is important that the principle of *suum cuique* be attended to so far as is possible in matters of research and scholarship, it is becoming more and more difficult to give every man his own in Shakespearian annotation. The amount of material accumulated is so great that the identity-origin of much important comment and suggestion is either wholly lost or so crushed out of shape as to be beyond recognition. Instructive significance perhaps attaches to this in editing the works of one who quietly made so much of materials gathered by others. But the list of authorities given on page xliv will indicate the chief source of much that has gone to enrich the value of this edition. Especial acknowledgment is here made of the obligations to Dr. William Aldis Wright and Dr. Horace Howard Furness, whose work in the collation of Quartos, Folios, and the more important English and American editions of Shakespeare has been of so great value to all subsequent editors and investigators.

With regard to the general plan of this revision of Hudson's Shakespeare, Professor W. P. Trent, of Columbia University, has offered valuable suggestions and given important advice. In the case of *Coriolanus* particular acknowledgment is due to Dr. Francis Kingsley Ball. To his critical acumen and literary sagacity are due the explanations connected with I, iv, 31–32 and II, iii, 233–240.

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INTRODUCTION

NOTE. In citations from Shakespeare's plays and nondramatic poems the numbering has reference to the Globe edition, except in the case of this play, where the reference is to this edition.

I. SOURCES

Modern criticism has swept away many of the dim heroic traditions of old Rome, and the story of Coriolanus has come to be regarded not as historic fact but as one of the most beautiful of early Roman legends. With questions of historical accuracy and fidelity to fact Shakespeare was not concerned. He was content to take the vivid, graphic narratives of Plutarch as authentic history. And he would have been justified in doing this, even if the later results of scholarly criticism and research had been at his command; for his business as an artist was to set forth a free and life-like portraiture of human character as modified by the old Roman nationality, and clothed with the drapery of the early Roman manners.

THE MAIN STORY

North's Plutarch. It is beyond doubt that in *Coriolanus* Shakespeare derived the great body of his historical material from *The Life of Caius Martius Coriolanus* in Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch.[1] This work was first printed

[1] Professor W. W. Skeat's *Shakespeare's Plutarch* (Macmillan and Co.) gives these *Lives* in convenient form with a text based upon the edition of 1612.

in 1579 in a massive folio dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. The title-page is given in facsimile as the frontispiece of this volume. A second edition appeared in 1595, and in all probability this was the edition read by Shakespeare. Its interesting title-page, reproduced in facsimile on page xiii, gives in brief the literary history of North's translation, which was made not directly from the original Greek of Plutarch, but from a French version by Jacques Amyot, bishop of Auxerre, the title-page of which is shown in facsimile on page xiv.[1] In 1603 appeared a third edition with additional *Lives* and new matter on the title-page. There were subsequent editions in 1612,[2] 1631, 1656, and 1676. The popularity of this work attested by these reprintings was thoroughly deserved, for North's Plutarch is among the richest and freshest monuments of Elizabethan prose literature, and, apart altogether from the use made of it by Shakespeare, is in itself an invaluable repertory of honest, manly, idiomatic English. All the more important passages drawn upon for the play are quoted in the footnotes to the text of this edition of *Coriolanus*. These will show that in most of the leading incidents the great Greek biographer is closely followed, though in many cases the incidents are worked out and developed with rare fertility of invention and art. In many places the Plutarchian form and order of thought, and also the very words of North's racy and delectable English, are retained, with such an embalming for immortality as

[1] Despite the assertion on North's title-page, Amyot, whose version appeared in 1559, probably translated from a Latin text.

[2] There is a famous copy of this edition in the Greenock Library with the initials "W. S." at the top of the title-page and seventeenth century manuscript notes and markings in the text. See Skeat's *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, Introduction, pages xii–xiii.

THE LIVES
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TITLE-PAGE OF NORTH'S PLUTARCH, SECOND EDITION

LES
VIES DES HOMMES
Illuſtres Grecs & Romains,
Comparees l'vne auec l'autre par Plutarque
de Chæronęe,

Tranſlatees de Grec en François.

A PARIS,
De l'imprimerie de Michel de Vaſcoſan.
M. D. LVIIII.

Auec Priuilege du Roy.

TITLE-PAGE OF AMYOT'S PLUTARQUE

Shakespeare alone could give. In addition to the many examples furnished in the notes, the following passages show the almost identical phrasing of Plutarch's prose and Shakespeare's verse. In Plutarch Coriolanus is described thus by one of his generals:

> For he was even such another, as Cato would have a soldier and a captain to be, not only terrible and fierce to lay about him, but to make the enemy afeard with the sound of his voice, and grimness of his countenance.

With this compare:

> Thou wast a soldier
> Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
> Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and
> The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
> Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world
> Were feverous, and did tremble. [I, iv, 56–61]

In *Coriolanus* Shakespeare's indebtedness to North's Plutarch may be summed up as extending to: (1) the general story of the play; (2) minor incidents and happenings, as the market-place incident (II, iii) in which Coriolanus displays his wounds to the populace; (3) descriptive detail, as in the description of the relationship existing between Coriolanus and his mother (I, iii, 1–35); and (4) reproduction of many passages almost word for word, including some of the finest speeches, as in the scene where Coriolanus in exile confronts Aufidius (IV, v).

On the other hand, Shakespeare's alteration of Plutarchian material is along the lines of (1) injection of picturesque and humorous details, as in the interruptions and rejoinders in the "pretty tale" of Menenius (I, i, 82–150); (2) effective portraiture both of the principal characters and of the less

important Menenius, Aufidius, Virgilia, and the tribunes, and (3) simplification and compression of the action for dramatic effect, as in condensing the three popular uprisings into one.

II. DATE OF COMPOSITION

Modern editors fix the date of composition of *Coriolanus* within 1608–1610, the later time limit (*terminus ante quem*), and 1598, the earlier time limit (*terminus post quem*). The weight of evidence is in favor of 1608–1610.

External Evidence

Research has found no conclusive evidence of a positive kind as to the date of composition. The negative evidence involved in the fact that *Coriolanus* is not mentioned by Francis Meres in the *Palladis Tamia*[1] does no more than establish 1598 as a probable *terminus post quem*.

Internal Evidence

1. *Allusions within the Play.* Though *Coriolanus* contains no unmistakable allusions to contemporary events or persons, investigators have based theories as to date of composition on certain passages within the play. The fable of the belly (I, i, 91–150) may be cited as bearing upon this question. While Shakespeare found this tale in North's Plutarch and has in general followed it as there given, Malone points out that "the same tale is also told of [Pope] Adrian the Fourth by Camden, in his *Remaines*, p. 199, under the head of *Wise Speeches*, with more particularity; and one or two of the

[1] In this work, published in 1598, Meres gives a list of twelve noteworthy Shakespeare plays in existence at that time.

expressions, as well as the enumeration of the functions performed by each of the members of the body, appear to have been taken from that book." Camden's *Remaines concerning Britain* was published in 1605, and quickly passed through seven editions. The following italicized passages in a quotation from Camden, given by Malone, show the points in which Shakespeare, whether or not intentionally, departs from Plutarch's version and follows that of Camden:

> All the members of the body conspired against the stomacke, as against the swallowing *gulfe* of all their labours; for whereas the *eies beheld, the eares heard, the handes laboured, the feete travelled, the tongue spake, and all partes performed their function, onely the stomacke lay ydle and* consumed all. Hereupon they ioyntly agreed al to forbeare their labours, and to pine away their lasie and publike enemy. One day passed over, the second followed very tedious, but the third day was so grievous to them all, that they *called a common Counsel*; The eyes waxed dimme, the feete could not support the body, the armes waxed lasie, the tongue faltered, and could not lay open the matter; Therefore they all with one accord desired the advise of the *Heart*. There *Reason* layd open before them, etc.

These resemblances to Camden, although regarded by some editors as proof that *Coriolanus* was not written until after 1605, are insignificant in comparison with the close adherence to Plutarch's narrative:

> All the members of a man's body did rebel against the belly, complaining of it, that it only remained in the midst of the body without doing any thing, neither did bear any labour to the maintenance of the rest: whereas all other parts and members did labour painfully, and were very careful, to satisfy the appetites and desires of the body. And so the belly, all this notwithstanding, laughed at their folly, and said: It is true, I first receive all meates that nourish man's body: but afterwards I send it again to the nourishment of other parts of the same. . . . For matters being well digested, and

their counsels throughly examined, touching the benefit of the commonwealth, the Senators are cause of the common commodity that cometh unto every one of you.

The assertion that *Coriolanus* must have been written earlier than 1609 is based chiefly on the likeness of the passage in Jonson's *The Silent Woman*, "Well, Dauphine, you have lurched your friends of the better half of the garland" to that in *Coriolanus*, II, ii, 98, "He lurch'd all swords of the garland." Jonson's play appeared in 1609.

2. *Qualities of Style and Diction.* The internal evidence of style, the skillful weaving of tragic complication, ethical suggestion, and political sagacity, the quality of the prose and blank verse (see below, Versification and Diction), the energy of the characterization, the close resemblance of workmanship to that of *Antony and Cleopatra*, which most editors agree was composed shortly before its entry in *The Stationers' Registers*, on May 20, 1608, — all point to the period of 1608–1610 as the probable date of composition.

It has been said that a true taste for Shakespeare is like the creation of a special sense; and this saying is nowhere better approved than in reference to his subtile variations of language and style. He began with what may be described as a preponderance of the poetic element over the dramatic. His development shows a gradual rising of the dramatic and ethical interest into strength and prominence. Where positive external evidence is lacking the probable date of composition may be argued from the relative strength of poetic, dramatic, and ethical elements. In *Coriolanus* we find such unity of action, severity of style, compactness of structure, and limiting of humorous by-play, as characterize the workmanship of his great tragic period, ushered in by *Julius Cæsar*

and concluded by *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*. Verse and diction tests,[1] the proportion of prose and verse and of rhymed and unrhymed lines in the regular dialogue, the number of feminine endings, light endings, weak endings, run-on lines, short lines, etc. (see below, Versification and Diction), strengthen the case for the date of composition suggested by the other evidence.

III. EARLY EDITIONS

Folios

On November 8, 1623, Edward Blount and Isaac Jaggard obtained formal license to print "Mr. William Shakespeeres Comedyes, Histories, and Tragedyes, soe manie of the said copyes as are not formerly entred to other men." This is the description-entry in *The Stationers' Registers* of what is now known as the First Folio (1623), designated in the textual notes of this edition F_1. *Coriolanus* is one of the plays "not formerly entred,"[2] and it was first printed, so far as is known, in this famous volume. Here it originally appeared first among the tragedies and was followed by *Titus Andronicus*; but later *Troilus and Cressida*, for some reason omitted from its proper place after *Romeo and Juliet*, was placed before it. The text of *Coriolanus* in the First Folio is frequently difficult and obscure, "due probably," the Cambridge editors point out, "to the carelessness or the illegibility of the manuscript from

[1] An excellent summary of these tests will be found in Dowden's *Shakspere Primer*, pages 39–46. See also Ward's *History of English Dramatic Literature*, Vol. II, pages 47–51.

[2] This is strong evidence that the play had not been printed at an earlier date.

which it was printed." This text, with the necessary emendations indicated in the textual notes and elsewhere, is the basis of the text of this edition of the play.

The Second Folio, F_2 (1632), the Third Folio, F_3 (1663, 1664), and the Fourth Folio, F_4 (1685), show few variants in the text of *Coriolanus* and none of importance.

Rowe's Editions

In the Folios the play is divided into acts, but not into scenes, though the first act is headed *Actus Primus*, *Scæna Prima*. The first systematic division into scenes was made by Nicholas Rowe, poet laureate to George I, in the edition which he issued in six octavo volumes in 1709. In this edition Rowe, an experienced playwright, marked the entrances and exits of the characters and introduced many stage directions. He also introduced the list of dramatis personæ which has been the basis for all later lists. A second edition in eight volumes was published in 1714. Rowe followed very closely the text of the Fourth Folio, but modernized spelling, punctuation, and occasionally grammar. These are the first critical editions of Shakespeare's plays.

IV. VERSIFICATION AND DICTION

Blank Verse

Coriolanus is one of the seven longest plays in the Shakespeare canon, and of its total of 3392 lines 2521 are in blank verse[1] — the unrhymed, iambic five-stress (decasyllabic) verse,

[1] The term 'blank verse' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day. It seems to have been used for the first time in literature in

or iambic pentameter, introduced into England from Italy by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, about 1540, and used by him in a translation of the second and fourth books of the *Æneid*. Nicholas Grimald (*Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557) employed the measure for the first time in English original poetry, and its roots began to strike deep into British soil and absorb substance. It is peculiarly significant that Sackville and Norton should have used it as the measure of *Gorboduc*, the first English tragedy (performed by "the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple" on January 18, 1561, and first printed in 1565). About the time when Shakespeare arrived in London the infinite possibilities of blank verse as a vehicle for dramatic poetry and passion were being shown by Kyd, and above all by Marlowe. Blank verse as used by Shakespeare is really an epitome of the development of the measure in connection with the English drama. In his earlier plays the blank verse is often similar to that of *Gorboduc*. The tendency is to adhere to the syllable-counting principle, to make the line the unit, the sentence and phrase coinciding with the line (end-stopped verse), and to use five perfect iambic feet to the line. In plays of the middle period, such as *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, written between 1596 and 1600, the blank verse is more like that of Kyd and Marlowe, with less monotonous regularity in the structure and an increasing tendency to carry on the sense from one line to another without a syntactical or rhetorical pause at the end of the line (run-on verse, *enjambement*). Redundant syllables now abound, and the

Nash's Preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, where we find the expression, "the swelling bumbast of bragging blanke verse." Shakespeare uses the expression three times, always humorously or satirically.

melody is richer and fuller. In Shakespeare's later plays, to which *Coriolanus* belongs, the blank verse breaks away from bondage to formal line limits, and sweeps all along with it in freedom, power, and organic unity.

The verse of *Coriolanus* shows perfect freedom from the monotonous regularity of the earlier plays; it is flexible and varied, musical and sonorous, and has the superb movement of the verse in *King Lear*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. End-stopped, normally regular iambic pentameter lines occur, but run-on verse predominates. Only *Cymbeline* and *King Henry the Eighth* show a larger proportion of such verse. There are 710 feminine endings (only six plays having a larger proportion), 60 light endings,[1] and 44 weak endings. "The light endings and weak endings, scanty in all the previous plays (the largest number being 21 of the former, and 2 of the latter in *Macbeth*), reach the number of 71 and 28 respectively, in *Antony*; 60 and 44 in *Coriolanus*; 78 and 52 in *Cymbeline*; 42 and 25 in *The Tempest*; 57 and 43 in *The Winter's Tale*." — Gollancz.

Alexandrines

While French prosodists apply the term 'Alexandrine' only to a twelve-syllable line with the pause after the sixth syllable, it is generally used in English to designate iambic six-stress verse, or iambic hexameter, of which we have examples in I, i, 199; I, iv, 6; I, x, 17. This was a favorite

[1] Light endings, as defined by Ingram, are such words as *am*, *can*, *do*, *has*, *I*, *thou*, etc., on which "the voice can to a certain small extent dwell"; weak endings are words like *and*, *for*, *from*, *if*, *in*, *of*, *or*, which "are so essentially proclitic . . . that we are forced to run them, in pronunciation no less than in sense, into the closest connection with the opening words of the succeeding line."

Elizabethan measure, and it was common in moral plays and the earlier heroic drama. English literature has no finer examples of this verse than the last line of each stanza of *The Faerie Queene.* In *Coriolanus* are 41 Alexandrines.

Rhyme

Apart from the use of rhyme in songs, lyrics, and portions of masques (as in *The Tempest*, IV, i, 60–138), a progress from more to less rhyme is a sure index to Shakespeare's development as a dramatist and a master of expression. In the early *Love's Labour's Lost* are more than 1000 rhyming five-stress iambic lines; in *Julius Cæsar* only 34; in *The Tempest* only 2; in *The Winter's Tale* not one. In *Coriolanus*, as in all the later plays, rhyme is used sparingly, there being in all only 13 rhyming couplets. Here it is used chiefly for the following purposes: (1) to mark the close of speeches and scenes, as in II, i, 151–152; IV, vii, 56–57; (2) to point an epigram or a maxim, as in IV, vii, 54–55; (3) to aid in expressing strong emotion, as in II, iii, 107–119, where Coriolanus gives way to his pent-up feelings in the longest rhymed passage in the play.

Prose

In the development of the English drama the use of prose as a vehicle of expression entitled to equal rights with verse was due to Lyly. He was the first to use prose with power and distinction in original plays and did memorable service in preparing the way for Shakespeare's achievement. Interesting attempts have been made to explain Shakespeare's distinctive use of verse and prose; and of recent years there has been much discussion of the question "whether we are

justified in supposing that Shakespeare was guided by any fixed principle in his employment of verse and prose, or whether he merely employed them, as fancy suggested, for the sake of variety and relief."[1] It is a significant fact that in many of his earlier plays there is little or no prose, and that the proportion of prose to blank verse increases with the decrease of rhyme. In the later plays five kinds of prose may be distinguished: (1) the prose of formal documents, as in letters and proclamations. (2) The prose of 'low life,' including the speech of comic characters, as in many of the scenes in which Menenius appears. This is a development of the humorous prose found, for example, in Greene's comedies that deal with humble life. (3) The colloquial prose of simple dialogue, as in the conversation between Volumnia, Virgilia, and Valeria (I, iii). In these passages, the prose diction gives temporary emotional relief and prepares for the heightening of the dramatic pitch in the scenes which immediately follow. But note that this scene changes to blank verse when Volumnia becomes excited. (4) The prose of abnormal mentality. (5) The essentially euphuistic prose. Of this there are few examples in *Coriolanus*, but in II, iii, where Coriolanus speaks now in verse and now in prose, his longest prose speech (lines 90–98) might be termed euphuistic. For the most part the prose of the play is that of homely dialogue and of serious information.

[1] Professor J. Churton Collins, *Shakespeare as a Prose Writer.* See Delius, *Die Prosa in Shakespeares Dramen* (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, V, 227–273); Janssen, *Die Prosa in Shakespeares Dramen*; Professor Hiram Corson, *An Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare*, pages 83–98.

V. DURATION OF TIME

1. *Historic Time.* A period of about four years is covered by the events of the play. The secession to the Mons Sacer, in the year of Rome, A.U.C. 262, opens the play, and the death of Coriolanus, A.U.C. 266, marks its close. The capture of Corioli ('Corioles' as Shakespeare wrote it, following North's Plutarch, and as it is always given in the text, stage directions, etc., of this edition of the play) is now reckoned to the year 493 B.C.

2. *Dramatic Time.* "The historical drama," says Bulwer-Lytton, "is the concentration of historical events." In *Coriolanus* the happenings of four years are represented as the occurrences of eleven days with intervals, distributed over the acts and scenes as follows:[1]

Day 1. — I, i.
Interval.
Day 2. — I, ii.
Interval.
Day 3. — I, iii–x.
Interval (Cominius and Martius return to Rome).
Day 4. — II, i.
Interval (ambassadors from Corioles have arrived in Rome).
Day 5. — II, i–IV, ii.
Interval (a few days).
Day 6. — IV, iii.
Day 7. — IV, iv, v.
Interval.
Day 8. — IV, vi.
Interval.
Day 9. — IV, vii.
Interval.
Day 10. — V, i–v.
Interval.
Day 11. — V, vi.

[1] P. A. Daniel in *New Shakspere Society Transactions*, 1877–1879, pages 183–188.

VI. DRAMATIC CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Coriolanus is a tragedy of the more extreme Shakespearian type, in which is represented a conflict between an individual, or group of individuals, and certain forces which environ, antagonize, and overwhelm. The interest centers in the personality of Coriolanus, and upon him depends the dramatic unity. In this play, as in all Shakespearian tragedy, five stages may be noted in the plot development: (1) the exposition, or introduction; (2) the complication, rising action, or growth; (3) the climax, crisis, or turning point; (4) the resolution, falling action, or consequence; and (5) the dénouement, catastrophe,[1] or conclusion. Let it not be thought for a moment that each of these stages is clearly differentiated. As a rule they pass insensibly into each other, as they do in life.

Analysis by Act and Scene[2]

I. The Exposition, or Introduction (Tying of the Knot)

Act I, Scene i. The first three scenes form an introduction to the play as a whole. *Coriolanus* is a tragedy of a human soul, and it is necessary to its success that the central figure be at first pictured with the light full on his strong features, and the defects untouched or barely suggested. The keynote of the struggle is sounded even in the opening lines, when one of the rabble says to his companions, "First, you know Caius Martius is chief enemy to the people" (line 7).

[1] "*Catastrophe* — the change or revolution which produces the conclusion or final event of a dramatic piece." — Johnson.

[2] "It must be understood that a play can be analyzed into very different schemes of plot. It must not be thought that one of these schemes is right and the rest wrong; but the schemes will be better or worse in proportion as — while of course representing correctly the facts of the play — they bring out more or less of what ministers to our sense of design." — Moulton.

it is this assumption on the part, first of the common people, and later of the senators, that enmity exists between them and Coriolanus that makes inevitable the continuous misunderstanding and final disaster. The first scene foreshadows not only the supreme struggle between Coriolanus and his fate but the lesser although historically more significant struggle between the rulers and the ruled. Only conflict and tragedy can come from the personal material presented here. Coriolanus is not made to appear until line 158, when the audience has been fully acquainted with the necessary facts.

Act I, Scene ii. As an important element in the dramatic exposition, Aufidius is introduced and preparation is made for the part he plays in the entanglements of the rising action. The keynote of "enmity" is again heard when Coriolanus is named as the "old enemy" (line 12) of Aufidius. Attention is called to the external wars which are engrossing Rome and have such an important part to play later in the falling action of the tragedy.

Act I, Scene iii. Now that the central character and his chief opponents have been introduced, it remains for this last of the introductory scenes to bring forward Volumnia, who is so necessary to a complete picture of the hero and to the sequel of the plot. This domestic scene in which both Virgilia and her son also appear, relieves the tension already created by the statement of the internal and external troubles impending.

II. The Complication, Rising Action, or Growth (Tying of the Knot)

Act I, Scenes iv–x. In the threatened attacks on Rome by the Volsces, Coriolanus stands out as the champion of the city. He is now the ideal hero that wrings only wonder and fervent praise from the timorous souls. In Homeric fashion he meets the leader of the enemy's forces in single combat, and becomes the idol of Rome. By thus building up a heroic-sized figure, the dramatist has prepared the way for making the succeeding mistakes and misunderstandings which entangle Coriolanus and finally drag him down to ruin seem the very essence of tragedy. Aufidius is again shown as a growing rival, and the complication is tightened.

Act II, Scene i. In the second act the complication of the drama is greatly advanced, for at once the weaknesses which have heretofore been only suggested are seen in the glare of full light. Coriolanus lacks that tolerant sympathy for the common people which marks all truly great leaders, and this together with his overweening pride are the rocks on which he is wrecked. This scene looks both backward and forward: it reveals conditions in Rome and anticipates new interests. By contrasting the welcome which Coriolanus receives from the patricians with that given him by the plebeians, Shakespeare is reminding his audience that this is a conflict not only of an individual with his weaknesses but of class with class.

Act II, Scene ii. Up to this point the strongest feelings exposed have been those of jealousy and active enmity toward Coriolanus. Now that his success against the Volsces has made him the popular hero, he is at a turning of the ways. This dramatic opportunity fully to retrieve a safe place in the hearts of the people is not seized by him, and the full significance of the complication is revealed.

Act II, Scene iii. Now is accomplished what has been foreshadowed — Coriolanus is tested and fails. The plebeians, so susceptible to chance moods, are completely alienated by his haughtiness and irony, and the action is hastened when they submit to the suggestions of the intriguing tribunes.

Act III, Scene i. The action is rapid. The way has been fully prepared by preceding events for all that is to follow. One political blunder after another on the part of Coriolanus in dealing with the people gives to this scene the complexion of tragedy itself. Now that all classes are turned against Coriolanus in open hostility, the complication is almost complete.

Act III, Scene ii. A powerful factor in the emotional interest of the drama appears for the second time. Volumnia's influence on both the future of Rome and the character of her son prepares for that dramatic scene in the falling action (V, iii) in which the mother triumphs and Rome is saved.

Act III, Scene iii, lines 1–86. The element of suspense is introduced, and again opportunity is given Coriolanus to retrieve his blunders. In this new failure to measure up to heroic size the dramatic complication is complete.

III. The Climax, Crisis, or Turning Point (the Knot Tied)

Act III, Scene iii, lines 87–143. In the disastrous close of the career of Coriolanus in Rome comes the crisis of the play.

IV. The Resolution, Falling Action, or Consequence (the Untying of the Knot)

Act IV, Scene i. Even in his failures Coriolanus is made to retain the eager sympathy of the audience because of the unjust accusations brought against him. And in showing him here as son, husband, and father as well as defeated political leader, the dramatist wins fresh sympathy to his side.

Act IV, Scene ii. This scene is a bit of effective contrast such as only Shakespeare knew how to give. The pride and righteous indignation of Volumnia are shown against the insincerity and cowardice of the tribunes.

Act IV, Scenes iii–iv. Again the external affairs of Rome are forced into prominence, and in the threatened attack of the Volsces on Rome and in the alliance of Coriolanus with Aufidius, the enemy of Rome, the way is opened for the final disaster. There is still, however, so much of purpose and strength in Coriolanus that both sympathy and interest are still centered in him.

Act IV, Scene v. The first step that leads to the final undoing of Coriolanus is taken. Again a certain element of suspense is introduced in the reconciliation effected between sworn enemies. The audience wonders and doubts, then turns expectantly to succeeding events, hoping to find their fears unfounded.

Act IV, Scene vi. As a piece of stage business this scene is most effective, for the audience already knows what is about to befall Rome. The disaster that threatens the tribunes suggests a dénouement eagerly wished for.

Act IV, Scene vii. The resolution is advanced, and the ultimate failure forecasted in the reawakening of jealousy between Aufidius and Coriolanus.

Act V, Scenes i–ii. By picturing the consternation in Rome, and the unsuccessful attempt of Menenius and Cominius to shake Coriolanus from his purpose of destroying the city, a fitting background

has been made for the dramatic meeting of the vanquished son and his mother.

Act V, Scene iii. This is the most dramatic and the finest scene of the play. The clash between two strong spirits, and the strength and dignity of the combatants — Coriolanus and Volumnia — intensify the tragic emotion.

Act V, Scenes iv–v. The change in Rome from despair to rejoicing emphasizes the mother's triumph and the son's defeat.

V. Dénouement, Catastrophe, or Conclusion (the Knot Untied)

Act V, Scene vi. Coriolanus has failed, yet so great has been the sympathy aroused in his behalf, even in the midst of the catastrophe that his sins of haughtiness and prejudice have brought upon him, that the audience is scarcely ready to meet the only solution of the tragic tangle — his violent death.

VII. THE CHARACTERS

Coriolanus

The Coriolanus that Shakespeare found in Plutarch is referred to by the Greek historian in these calm and weighty sentences:

While the force and vigour of his soul, and a persevering constancy in all he undertook, led him successfully into many noble achievements, yet, on the other side, by indulging the vehemence of his passion, and through an obstinate reluctance to yield or accommodate his humours and sentiments to those of people about him, he rendered himself incapable of acting and associating with others. Those who saw with admiration how proof his nature was against all the softness of pleasure, the hardships of service, and the allurements of gain, while allowing to that universal firmness of his the respective names of temperance, fortitude, and justice, yet, in the life of the citizen and the statesman, could not choose but be disgusted at the severity and ruggedness of his deportment, and with his overbearing, haughty, and imperious temper. Education

and study, and the favours of the Muses, confer no greater benefit on those that seek them than these humanizing and civilizing lessons, which teach our natural qualities to submit to the limitations prescribed by reason, and to avoid the wildness of extremes

Shakespeare not only makes pride the master-principle of Coriolanus but also shows that his pride is rendered uncontrollable by passion. It is therefore strictly characteristic of the man that an unexpected word of reproach stings him to the quick: the instant it touches his ear, he explodes like a rocket. It is on this knowledge that the wily tribunes work, watching the time to sting him into some fatal provocation of popular resentment. Here, with great judgment, and without any hint from Plutarch, Shakespeare makes Aufidius, when the time is ripe, touch him into an ecstasy of passionate rage by spitting the term 'boy' at him. Because of the utter unfitness of such an epithet, his very pride, if restrained by reason and self-respect, would have caused him to answer it with calm and silent scorn. But he resents it in proportion as it strikes wide of him, and makes its very absurdity the cause of its power over him.

The people would gladly reward his noble acts with the highest honours in their gift, if they did not say to themselves, "he pays himself with being proud." They glory in his valor and prowess, but complain that he is too proud of being so valiant. They feel that his heroic exploits are done not at all to win their respect and good will, or from any impulse of patriotism, but only to feed his inordinate egotism. They even grant that the fault is something inherent in his nature, and are ready to make large allowance for him on this score. But he seems to them to delight in serving them only to turn his service into a vantage-ground for spurning them.

On the other hand, there is much in the people that is not deserving of respect. This Coriolanus seizes on greedily. He scorns their meanness, and uses this as the cause for scorning them. He cannot see in them anything that is not vile. Still he is placed where his pride cannot reach its mark but by their suffrage; he must pay his court to that which most galls and offends it. He therefore tries to have his greatness force honours from them in spite of his contempt of them, because such a contradiction between their feeling and their acting serves to emphasize his superiority. This is well shown in the words of one of those almost characterless speakers whom Shakespeare sometimes endows with much candor and shrewdness of observation, and then uses as the mouthpiece of his own judgment:

> If he did not care whether he had their love, or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good, nor harm; but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him, and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people, is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love. [II, ii, 15–21]

Hence, when he goes out to beg their voices, he is careful to spice his requests with mockery, and to let them see that his spirit disclaims what his tongue speaks.

It is a bold but most natural stroke of character that Coriolanus, notwithstanding his alleged intense aversion to seeming at all the thing he is not, can yet skillfully hide his feelings when it serves his purpose well. From his bearing toward the people, one would suppose it were quite impossible for him to practice any sort of concealment. On this ground Menenius apologizes for his rough bluntness:

His nature is too noble for the world:
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for's power to thunder: his heart's his mouth:
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent.
[III, i, 255–258]

Consider this: he has been bred i' th' wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill-school'd
In bolted language: meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. [III, i, 319–322]

Thus others think him, and even he thinks himself, utterly incapable of insincerity. When his friends entreat him to comply outwardly with the people's humor, he frankly declares:

I will not do't;
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness. [III, ii, 120–123]

Coriolanus, however, is not altogether "himself his world and his own god": he has other and better forces, which often rise against his egotism, and sometimes prevail over it. His character is indeed contradictory, and all its parts, good and bad, are fashioned on so large a scale as to yield sufficient evidence for making out a strong case either of all blame or of all praise. At the same time the several lines are so bold and pronounced that it is not easy for one to keep clear of extremes. Even his pride, with all its anti-social harshness, is not destitute of amiable and engaging features. There are some points of nobleness and magnanimity about it. His attitude toward family, country, talents, and courage enter into its composition, and make it a part of the general greatness of his character.

With all his passionate craving for renown, Coriolanus still counts it among his chief honours to be the cause that others are honoured. If he is jealous of the position of his fellow patricians, he is jealous of their virtue too, and would have them deserve to hold the place of supreme power and reverence in the State. It should be remembered that the admission of the people to a direct share in the government is a new idea to Coriolanus. He resents it as an invasion of ancient right; he fears it as a seed of political anarchy and dissolution. Old Rome was indeed a wonderful nation, and Shakespeare found in the character of Coriolanus an apt and inviting occasion for representing the struggle between those two antagonist forces, whose reconcilement and unity did so much towards building and cementing the later Roman Empire.

Coriolanus is modest. He cannot frame the language of flattery, and he has an honest aversion to being flattered. So far his temper is noble and just, yet he is so ostentatious and emphatic, not to say supercilious, in his disgust of flattery, as to breed some doubt whether, after all, it is anything but egotism in disguise, or whether it is not more the result of arrogance than of real modesty. When he so energetically scouts to hear his "nothings monster'd" (II, ii, 74), there is in his manner a strong suggestion of haughty contempt for his praisers, or a certain critical loftiness of mind, as if he craved occasions for rebuking his friends and admirers, and of making them feel his immense superiority. Men have sometimes towered so high in self-approval as to scorn the approval of their fellows. The attitude of Coriolanus sometimes suggests that he felt his greatness to be of so transcendent a pitch as to make "breath poor and speech

unable." Such display of egotism may, and sometimes does, pass for modesty, for it is apt to use the style of that virtue. That Shakespeare saw the germs of this disease in the deep intricacies of the human heart is apparent from his saying of Ulysses that he "speaks not to himself but with a pride that quarrels at self-breath" (*Troilus and Cressida*, II, iii, 181–182). His delineation of Coriolanus more than once suggests that the hero's disdaining of honours is at least partly in the idea that no honours can come up to his merit. This is shown more clearly when his arrogance reaches the height of supposing that all Rome cannot counterbalance his own gigantic importance. On being banished, Coriolanus assumes that the loss of his single person will be worse for Rome than the loss of Rome will be to him, and so retorts:

> You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
> As reek o' th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize
> As the dead carcasses of unburied men
> That do corrupt my air: I banish you. [III, iii, 120–123]

Coriolanus and his Mother

Of Coriolanus Plutarch says that the only thing which caused him to love honour was the delight his mother had of him, for nothing made him so happy as that she might always see him return with a crown upon his head, and still embrace him, with tears running down her cheeks for joy. As represented by Shakespeare, he can outface the rest of the world, but his mother, with his household treasures at her side, is too much for him. Even when he has conquered all the armies of his country, and has the State itself at his feet, her strength of soul and patriotic devotion conquer him. In his rapture of self-confidence, he aspires to act the god, but

when at last a diviner power masters him, and his arrogance succumbs to the touch of domestic awe and tenderness, he frankly yields himself human. Perhaps in all literature there is not another such instance of pride struggling with affection, and of an iron will subdued by the appeals of the heart, as when he sees the embassy of women approaching:

> My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould
> Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand
> The grandchild to her blood. But out, affection!
> All bond and privilege of nature, break!
> Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.
> What is that curtsy worth? Or those doves' eyes,
> Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am not
> Of stronger earth than others: my mother bows,
> As if Olympus to a molehill should
> In supplication nod: and my young boy
> Hath an aspect of intercession, which
> Great nature cries 'Deny not.' [V, iii, 22–33]

And later in the same scene the picture of the conqueror's haughtiness and hardness gradually softening and at length melting away altogether at the voice of his mother's pleading, is one of the great passages in literature. Such a mingling of austerity and tenderness is met with nowhere else in Shakespeare's poetry. It is to be noted that the mother's triumph does not seem to be fully consummated till her great woman's heart stiffens up with something of the son's pride, and she turns away with an air of defiance:

> Come, let us go:
> This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;
> His wife is in Corioles, and his child
> Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch:
> I am hush'd until our city be afire. [V, iii, 177–181]

That she can be like him in pride tempers that quality in him, and disposes him to be like her in other points. We are prepared for this crowning victory of the mother by a lighter example of the same kind in III, ii, where Volumnia urges her son to appease the infuriated multitude by playing the amiable towards them. His pride shows intense repugnance to the undertaking, but she subdues him to it:

> At thy choice then:
> To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour
> Than thou of them. Come all to ruin: let
> Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
> Thy dangerous stoutness; for I mock at death
> With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
> Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'st it from me:
> But owe thy pride thyself. [III, ii, 123–130]

Coriolanus and his Wife

The mother's is not the only influence at work to win Coriolanus from his unnatural purpose and recall him to better thoughts. To be sure she does most of the speaking, but her speech is powerfully reënforced by the presence and aspect of others. Little is said of Virgilia, and still less is said by her, but that little is so managed as to infer a great deal. A gentle, retiring, undemonstrative person, she has nevertheless much quiet firmness, and even a dash of something like obstinacy, in her disposition. Her power touches the depths of her husband's heart, and is the more effective with him for being the power of delicacy and sweetness and so utterly unlike his own. When he returns from the war covered with glory, her silent tears of joy are to him sweeter than the loud applause of all the rest. He hails her as "my gracious silence" and plays out his earnest tenderness in the question,

" Wouldst thou have laugh'd, had I come coffin'd home, that weep'st to see me triumph ? " (II, i, 167–168). How deeply her still forces have stolen into his being, is effectively shown in what he says to her when she comes with her speechless supplication to second the voice of his mother's remonstrance :

> Best of my flesh,
> Forgive my tyranny ; but do not say
> For that, ' Forgive our Romans.' O, a kiss
> Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge !
> Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
> I carried from thee, dear ; and my true lip
> Hath virgin'd it e'er since. [V, iii, 42–48]

Here he finds his whole household in something more powerful than arms to resist him — the mother, the wife, the child, all are shaming his revenge by standing true to their fatherland against him. The words just quoted show that the power of the silent mourner is even more penetrating than that of the eloquent pleader. The two women have hearts stronger in love than his in pride, and the first object of that love is the old Rome of their fathers. Both the mother and the wife are steadfastly resolved that, if he march any farther against that object, it shall be over their bodies, while the boy's Roman spirit flashes up in the strange declaration,

> A shall not tread on me :
> I 'll run away till I am bigger, but then I 'll fight.
> [V, iii, 127–128]

The hideous unnaturalness of his course is brought fully home to Coriolanus at thus seeing his own flesh and blood instinctively bent on resisting him. In the presence of " the

noble sister of Publicola; the moon of Rome" (V, iii, 64–65), he sees how all that is most illustrious in the same proud patrician stock on which he so much prides himself, even those who were most hurt in his banishment, will rather unite with his banishers in imploring the gods against him than surrender their country to his revenge. This suggests that what may have most appealed to Shakespeare in this ancient tale of Roman patriotism was, that while, to the minds of those high-souled men and women it was a wonderful thing to be patricians, to be Romans was a much greater.

Roman Womanhood

A nation's favorite legends have a close connection with its character, and are the spontaneous outgrowth of its peculiar genius and spirit. That they reflect its ideals of right and good is what gives them life and currency. In the primitive Roman scheme of thought the warrior held the first place, the mother the second. Womanhood in general was a great power in old Rome, and to be a mother was the highest honour but one. The gods were believed on several occasions to have bestowed special blessings and deliverances on the commonwealth through the women. Temples were built, high honours paid to womanhood, in the faith that the women had repeatedly been the salvation of their country from ruin. In the intercession which prevailed with Coriolanus the women were held to have been kindled and moved to the undertaking by the special inspiration of the gods. This seems to mean that the men of old Rome believed that the gods would not continue to give them success and honour if they ceased to respect their mothers and their wives.

In the legend of Coriolanus the hero's character stands out as a special impersonation of the two great ideas of martial courage and prowess and filial piety and submission. Reverence for parents, the religion of home, the sacredness of the domestic enclosure, worship of the houshold gods, whatever shed consecration on the family, and surrounded it with the angels of piety and awe — these were the cornerstone of the old Roman discipline, the palladium of the national strength and virtue. To fight bravely, to suffer heroically, for their country were the public parts of manly honour; while its heart and center stood in having something at home worth fighting and suffering for. Of this something motherhood was the soul, and the best thoughts of every worthy Roman drew to the point of being "more brave for this, that they had much to love."

Volumnia

In this view, Volumnia aptly impersonates the woman's and the mother's side of the Roman system. She is a superb figure, a genuine woman throughout, though with a high strain of what may be called manliness pervading her womanhood. She has all of her son's essential strength and greatness of character, and is nearly as proud as he. But her pride has a much less individual and unsocial cast. He is the chief concern of her pride, while self is the chief concern of his. She is proud of him far more for her country's sake than for his or her own. Her supreme ambition is that he should be the greatest among the Romans; and she would have his greatness stand in being more a Roman than any of the others. Hence her pride so flames out in fierce resentment at the sentence of exile that to those who are not in

sympathy with her anger she seems insane in her imprecation against the tribunes:

> I would the gods had nothing else to do
> But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em
> But once a-day, it would unclog my heart
> Of what lies heavy to 't [IV, ii, 45–48];

and in her hot remonstrance against the quiet weeping grief of her daughter-in-law:

> Anger 's my meat: I sup upon myself,
> And so shall starve with feeding: come, let 's go;
> Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do,
> In anger, Juno-like. [IV, ii, 50–53]

Against the people also she violently raves, and speaks as if she would gladly see Rome burned, since Rome rejects her heart's idol; but the sequel shows this to be all because she is so intensely Roman in spirit. Later her actions speak quite another language, and she is as far from sympathizing with her son in his selfish vindictiveness as she had been from sympathizing with the people's madness in banishing him. That a Roman should aspire to fight his way to the highest honours in Rome seems to her only reasonable, but that he should fight for anything but Rome, is beyond her conception. When, therefore, she sees her son waging war against his country, it seems to her that he is making war against the one sole object or end of war. She would rather die with Rome than see him grow by the death of that for which alone, in her view, a Roman should wish to live.

As the mother's pride is tempered by a more disinterested and patriotic spirit than the son's, so she holds a much more firm and steady course. Her words, in moments of high resentment, fly about wildly, but her heart sticks fast to its

cherished aims. And her energy of thought and purpose, if not greater than her son's, yet in the end triumphs over his, because it proceeds on grounds less selfish and personal. She knows and feels that the gods are with her in it. Shakespeare wisely, and out of his own invention, represents her as exhorting Coriolanus to temporize with the people, and to use arts of blandishment for conciliating them:

> I prithee now, my son,
> Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;
> And thus far having stretch'd it (here be with them)
> Thy knee bussing the stones (for in such business
> Action is eloquence, and the eyes of th' ignorant
> More learned than the ears) waving thy head,
> Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
> Now humble as the ripest mulberry,
> That will not hold the handling: or say to them,
> Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils
> Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
> Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
> In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame
> Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
> As thou hast power and person. [III, ii, 72–86]

Like a true woman, she "would dissemble" with her nature, where her fortune and her friends at stake required she should do so in honour. To her sense and judgment of things, deeds are to be weighed more by their ends and effects than by their intrinsic quality. That is, a man should act rather with a view to help and comfort those about him, to serve his country and his kind, than to feed his moral egotism, or any sullen pride, or whim of self-applause. It is even a rule of honour with her that a man should be more considerate of what will further the welfare and happiness

of others than of what will please himself, or accord with any inward or ideal standard of his own.

Volumnia, while she appears more admirable than lovely in her style, is an accurate representative of the old Roman matronly character, in which strength and dignity seem to have had rather the better of sweetness and delicacy, but which enshrined the very soul of rectitude and honour. The story of the life of this mother and son, as set forth in the play, reproduces the old Roman domestic system, and the religious awe of motherhood which formed so large and powerful an element in the social constitution of that wonderful people.

Aufidius

Tullus Aufidius makes an effective foil to Coriolanus, the contrast between them being drawn in just the right way to show off the vein of true nobleness in Coriolanus. Aufidius has all the pride and passionateness of the hero, without any of his gratitude and magnanimity. In Coriolanus the spirit of rivalry and emulation never passes the bounds of honour; in Aufidius it turns to downright personal envy and hate. Coriolanus glories in him as an antagonist, and loves to whip him in fair fight, but is far above all thought of ruining him or stabbing him in the dark. The shocking speech of Aufidius, in the first scene where he appears after the taking of Corioles, is a skillful forecast and premonition of his transport of baseness at the close:

> Nor sleep nor sanctuary,
> Being naked, sick; nor fane nor Capitol,
> The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
> Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up
> Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
> My hate to Martius. Where I find him, were it

> At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
> Against the hospitable canon, would I
> Wash my fierce hand in 's heart. [I, x, 19–27]

This speech, of which Coleridge[1] says, "I have such deep faith in Shakespeare's heart-lore, that I take for granted that this is in nature; although I cannot in myself discover any germ of possible feeling, which could wax and unfold itself into such a sentiment," is not a fair index of the speaker's real mind. It is one of those violent and impulsive extravagances of a very ambitious and inconstant nature writhing in an agony of disappointment. In such cases dark thoughts often bubble up from unseen depths in the mind, yet do not crystallize into character. Still Aufidius comes near putting the thought of the speech into act at last. Verplanck has a happy comment on the passage: "The mortification of defeat embitters Aufidius' rivalry into hatred. When, afterwards, his banished rival appeals to his nobler nature, that hatred dies away, and his generous feeling revives. Bitter jealousy and hatred again grow up, as his glories are eclipsed by his former adversary; yet this dark passion, too, finally yields to a generous sorrow at his rival's death."

VIII. STAGE HISTORY

The Seventeenth Century

Little is known of the earliest stage productions of *Coriolanus*. No actor of Shakespeare's own time is associated with any character in the play, and even the patient research of Halliwell-Phillips revealed no contemporary reference to its production. The first performance of which we have

[1] *Notes and Lectures upon Shakespeare.*

definite knowledge was given in France in 1639 from an adaptation entitled *Coriolan*, by Urbane Chevreau. A second play of the same name by Gaspard Abeille was also produced in France in 1676. The first recorded appearance on the English stage was a version by Nahum Tate, entitled *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth, or The Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus*, which was published in 1682 and produced the same year at the Theatre Royal. Tate, in the dedication of his drama to the Right Honourable Charles Lord Herbert, admits that the tragedy is not altogether original with him, he "having in this adventure launcht out in Shakespeare's bottom." In the main he follows Shakespeare's plot, but the diction, which is commonplaceness itself, is wholly the author's. Among the attempts which he made to improve on Shakespeare the most interesting is the addition of a mad scene for Volumnia, the suicide of Virgilia, and the death of Aufidius and Menenius.

The Eighteenth Century

Not until 1719 do we hear of a second English adaptation of *Coriolanus*. In that year John Dennis's *The Invader of his Country, or the Fatal Resentment*, was played at the Drury Lane Theatre. The dedication of the published version, which appeared in 1729, reveals the fact that the stage production was a conspicuous failure. After his opening sentences Dennis says, "My Lord[1] Coriolanus throws himself at your Grace's feet, in order to obtain justice of you, after having received as injurious treatment from the petulant deportment of two or three insolent players as ever he did

[1] The play was dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle, the Lord Chamberlain.

from the brutal rage of the rabble. He has been banished from our theatre by the one, thro' a mistaken greediness of gain, as the other formerly expelled him from Rome through a groundless jealousy of power." Like Tate, Dennis outrageously mangled Shakespeare, although claiming that his production was "but a grafting upon Shakespeare's play." [1]

About the middle of the century a tragedy called *Coriolanus* was given at the Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, but curiously this is based partly on Shakespeare's drama and partly on a play of the same name written by James Thomson, the author of *The Seasons*, which was staged in 1749, the year after the poet's death. Thomson had taken as his sources Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Livy, whose narratives differ in many respects from that of Plutarch. It was left to the brilliant actor, John Philip Kemble, and his famous sister, Mrs. Siddons, to popularize this great Shakespearian tragedy on the stage. In an adaptation which was a mixture of Thomson and Shakespeare they appeared at Drury Lane in 1789. "Comparatively little attention was at first attracted by the revival. After a time, however, the part of Coriolanus became considered one of the best, if not the best, in the repertory of Kemble, and the Volumnia of Mrs. Siddons ranked only after her Constance and her Lady Macbeth." — Beeching.

The Nineteenth Century and Later

Twice in the earlier part of the nineteenth century Kemble produced *Coriolanus*, each time from the Thomson-Shakespeare version. On November 3, 1806, the play was

[1] See H. C. Beeching's Introduction to *Coriolanus* in *The Works of William Shakespeare*, edited by Henry Irving and Frank A. Marshall.

acted at Covent Garden with Kemble in the title-rôle and Mrs. Siddons as Volumnia, and eleven years later Kemble chose this for his farewell appearance on the stage. In March of 1817 Sir Walter Scott saw him in the play and wrote a few days later: "John Kemble is here to take leave, acting over all his great characters, and with all the spirit of his best years. He played Coriolanus last night fully as well as I ever saw him, and you know what a complete model he is of the Roman."

Within a few months Edmund Kean and Macready appeared on the London stage in *Coriolanus* in versions which, for the most part, were faithful to the play as written by Shakespeare. Kean was not successful in his interpretation, and Macready did not then add to his reputation by his performance. In 1838, however, he won high praise in the title-rôle in an elaborate revival given at Covent Garden. John Vanderhoff, in 1823, was favorably known in Edinburgh, Manchester, and Liverpool for his Coriolanus, and in 1828 Edwin Forrest's rendering secured an enthusiastic hearing in New York City. In the later years of the century Edwin Booth, John McCullough, and Lawrence Barrett played the part in America.

Sir Henry Irving's production in 1901 was given at a time when the great actor's health prevented him from sustaining the part with effectiveness. Except for M. Joubé's appearance as Coriolanus at a performance in Paris in 1910, and the unsuccessful attempt at revival by Irving, the twentieth century has done little to reawaken interest in the great Roman tragedy.

AUTHORITIES

(With the more important abbreviations used in the notes)

F_1 = First Folio, 1623.
F_2 = Second Folio, 1632.
F_3 = Third Folio, 1663, 1664.
F_4 = Fourth Folio, 1685.
Ff = all the seventeenth century Folios.
Rowe = Rowe's editions, 1709, 1714.
Pope = Pope's editions, 1723, 1728.
Theobald = Theobald's editions, 1733, 1740.
Hanmer = Hanmer's edition, 1744.
Johnson = Johnson's edition, 1765.
Capell = Capell's edition, 1768.
Malone = Malone's edition, 1790.
Steevens = Steevens's edition, 1793.
Staunton = Howard Staunton's edition, 1857–1860.
Globe = Globe edition (Clark and Wright), 1864.
Dyce = Dyce's (third) edition, 1875.
Clar = Clarendon Press edition (W. A. Wright), 1877.
Delius = Delius's (fifth) edition, 1882.
Camb = Cambridge (third) edition (W. A. Wright), 1891.
Chambers = E. K. Chambers's Warwick edition.
Verity = A. W. Verity's Pitt Press edition.
Gollancz = Israel Gollancz's *The Temple Shakespeare.*
Herford = C. H. Herford's *The Eversley Shakespeare.*
Abbott = E. A. Abbott's *A Shakespearian Grammar.*
Schmidt = Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon.*
Murray = *A New English Dictionary* (*The Oxford Dictionary*).
Plutarch = North's *Plutarch*, 1579.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART

Except in the case of Shakespeare's plays (see note) the literature dates refer to first publication

YEAR	SHAKESPEARE		BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE	HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY
	BIOGRAPHY; POEMS	PLAYS		
1564	Birth. Baptism, April 26, Stratford-on-Avon		**Quart livre de Pantagruel**	Michelangelo died. Calvin died. Marlowe born. Galileo born
1565	Father became alderman		Sackville and Norton's **Gorboduc** printed	Philip II of Spain gave his name to Philippine Islands
1566	Brother Gilbert born		Udall's **Roister Doister** printed?	Murder of Rizzio
1568	Father, as bailiff of Stratford, entertained Queen's and Earl of Worcester's actors	NOTE. The plays in the columns below are arranged in the probable, though purely conjectural, order of composition. Dates appended to plays are those of first publication. Where no date is given, the play was first published in the First Folio (1623). M signifies that the play was mentioned by Meres in the **Palladis Tamia** (1598)	The Bishops Bible. La Taille's **Saülle Furieux.** R. Grafton's **Chronicle**	Mary of Scots a prisoner in England. Ascham died. Coverdale died. Netherlands War of Liberation
1572			Camoens' **Os Lusiadas** (The Lusiads)	Knox died. Massacre of St. Bartholomew
1573			Tasso's **Aminta**	Ben Jonson born? Donne born
1574	Brother Richard born		**Mirror for Magistrates** (third edition)	Earl of Leicester's players licensed
1575			**Gammer Gurton's Needle.** Golding's Ovid (complete)	Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth. Palissy lectured on Natural History
1576			**The Paradise of Dainty Devices.** Gascoigne's **Steel Glass**	"The Theatre" opened in Finsbury Fields, London, followed by "The Curtain." Hans Sachs died
1577	Father in financial difficulties		Holinshed's **Chronicle**	Drake sailed to circumnavigate globe

1579	Sister Ann died (aged eight)				Gosson's **School of Abuse.** North's Plutarch. Lyly's **Euphues** (pt. 1). Spenser's **Shepherd's Calendar**	Union of Utrecht. Tasso put in confinement at Ferrara
1580	Brother Edmund born				Montaigne's **Essais** (first edition)	Brown founded Separatists. Camoens died
1581					Tasso's **Gerusalemme Liberata**	Dutch Declaration of Independence
1582	Married Anne Hathaway				The Rheims New Testament	Accademia della Crusca founded
1583	Daughter Susanna born				Garnier's **Les Juives**	Sir Humphrey Gilbert drowned
1584					Lyly's **Campaspe.** Peele's **Arraignment of Paris**	William the Silent assassinated. Ivan the Terrible died
1585	Twin children (Hamnet, Judith) born				Guarini's **Pastor Fido** (1590)	Ronsard died
1586	Probably went to London				Camden's **Britannia**	Sir Philip Sidney killed
1587					Hakluyt's **Four Voyages.** **Faustbuch** (Spiess, Frankfort)	Execution of Mary of Scots
1588					**Martin Marprelate: The Epistle**	Defeat of Spanish Armada
1589		COMEDIES	HISTORIES	TRAGEDIES	Puttenham's **Art of English Poesie**	Henry of Navarre, King of France. Palissy died in Bastille
1590		Love's Labour's Lost (M, 1598)			Marlowe's **Tamburlaine.** Spenser's **Faerie Queene**, I–III. Lodge's **Rosalynde.** Sidney's **Arcadia**	Battle of Ivry
1591		Comedy of Errors (M)	1 Henry VI 2 Henry VI		Sidney's **Astrophel and Stella.** Harington's tr. of **Orlando Furioso**	Herrick born

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART (CONTINUED)

YEAR	SHAKESPEARE				BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE	HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY
	BIOGRAPHY; POEMS	PLAYS (see note above)				
1592	Greene's attack in **Groatsworth of Wit**	**Two Gentlemen of Verona** (M)	**Richard III** (M, 1597). **3 Henry VI**	**Romeo and Juliet** (M, 1597)	Daniel's **Delia**. Lyly's **Gallathea** (Galatea)	Greene died. Montaigne died. London theatres closed through plague
1593	**Venus and Adonis** (seven editions, 1593–1602)		**King John** (M). **Richard II** (M, 1597)	**Titus Andronicus** (M, 1594)	Peele's **Edward I.** Barnes's **Sonnets**	Marlowe died. Herbert born
1594	**Lucrece** (five editions, 1594–1616)	**A Midsummer Night's Dream** (M, 1600)			Rinuccini's **Dafne. Satire Ménipée**	Palestrina ("Princeps Musicæ") died
1595	Valuable contemporary references to Shakespeare	**All 's Well that Ends Well. Taming of the Shrew**			**Peele's Old Wives' Tale. Spenser's Epithalamion**	Tasso died. Sir Walter Raleigh's expedition to Guiana. Sir J. Hawkins died
1596	Son Hamnet died. Family applied for coat-of-arms		**1 Henry IV** (M, 1598). **2 Henry IV** (1600)		Drayton's **Mortimeriados. Faerie Queene**, Books IV–VI	Burbage built Blackfriar's Theatre. Descartes born. Sir F. Drake died
1597	Purchased **New Place**, Stratford	**Merry Wives of Windsor. Merchant of Venice** (M, 1600)			Bacon's **Essays** (first edition). Hall's **Virgidemiarum**	The Tyrone rebellion
1598	Shakespeare acted in Jonson's **Every Man in His Humour**	**Much Ado About Nothing** (1600)	**Henry V** (1600)		Meres's **Palladis Tamia**. Chapman's Homer (pt. 1). Lope de Vega's **Arcadia**	Peele died. Edict of Nantes
1599	Part proprietor of Globe Theatre. Coat-of-arms granted. **The Passionate Pilgrim**	**As You Like It**			Aleman's **Guzman de Alfarache**. Peele's **David and Bethsabe**	Spenser died. Globe Theatre built. Oliver Cromwell born
1600	Won a London lawsuit	**Twelfth Night**			**England's Helicon**	Calderon born. Bruno died

1601	Father died. **The Phœnix and Turtle**			Julius Cæsar	Jonson's **Poetaster**	The Essex plot. Rivalry between London adult and boy actors
1602	Purchased more Stratford real estate			Hamlet (1603)	Dekker's **Satiromastix**	Bodleian Library founded
1603	His company acted before the Queen	**Troilus and Cressida** (1609)			Jonson's **Sejanus**	Queen Elizabeth died. Millenary Petition
1604	Sued Rogers at Stratford	**Measure for Measure**		Othello	Marlowe's **Faustus** (1588–1589)	Hampton Court Conference
1605	Godfather to William D'Avenant			Macbeth	**Don Quixote** (pt. 1)	Gunpowder plot. Sir Thomas Browne born
1606	**King Lear** given before Court			King Lear (1608)	Chapman's **Monsieur D'Olive**	Lyly died. Corneille born
1607	Daughter Susanna married Dr. Hall			Timon of Athens	Dekker and Webster's **Westward Ho!**	Settlement of Jamestown
1608	Birth of granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall. Death of mother (Mary Arden)	**Pericles** (1609)		**Antony and Cleopatra**	Captain John Smith's **A True Relation.** Middleton's **A Mad World**	Milton born. Quebec founded
1609	**Sonnets. A Lover's Complaint**			Coriolanus	The Douai Old Testament	Separatists (Pilgrims) in Leyden
1610	Purchased more real estate	**Cymbeline**			Strachey's **Wracke and Redemption**	Henry IV (Navarre) assassinated
1611	Subscribed for better highways	**Winter's Tale** **The Tempest**			King James Bible (A.V.). Bellarmine's **Puissance du Pape**	Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden
1613	Invested in London house property. Brother Richard died		**Henry VIII**		Drayton's **Polyolbion**	Globe Theatre burned
1616	Made his will. Daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney. Died April 23 (May 3, New Style)				Captain John Smith's **New England.** Folio edition of Jonson's Poems. D'Aubigné's **Les Tragiques** (1577)	Cervantes died. Beaumont died. Baffin explores Baffin's Bay. Harvey lectured on the circulation of the blood

DISTRIBUTION OF CHARACTERS

In this analysis are shown the acts and scenes in which the characters (see Dramatis Personæ, page 2) appear, with the number of speeches and lines given to each.

NOTE. Parts of lines are counted as whole lines.

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS	I, i	12	75
	I, iv	9	34
	I, v	3	18
	I, vi	9	50
	I, viii	3	9
	I, ix	8	45
	II, i	7	20
	II, ii	7	24
	II, iii	19	65
	III, i	31	147
	III, ii	14	58
	III, iii	13	50
	IV, i	6	45
	IV, iv	4	25
	IV, v	17	64
	V, ii	3	14
	V, iii	14	106
	V, vi	8	35
		187	884
TITUS LARTIUS	I, i	2	6
	I, iv	8	17
	I, v	3	11
	I, vii	2	7
	I, ix	3	5
	III, i	5	12
		23	58
COMINIUS	I, i	3	3
	I, vi	13	44
	I, ix	8	55
	II, i	3	3
	II, ii	2	47
	III, i	12	26
	III, ii	4	10
	III, iii	3	11
	IV, i	1	7
	IV, vi	11	39
	V, i	6	31
		66	276
MENENIUS AGRIPPA	I, i	18	92
	II, i	27	112
	II, ii	11	39
	II, iii	5	13
	III, i	36	92
	III, ii	9	20
	III, iii	6	14
	IV, i	1	5
	IV, ii	4	5
	IV, vi	17	56
	V, i	10	40
	V, ii	13	51
	V, iv	7	34
		164	573
SICINIUS VELUTUS	I, i	7	16
	II, i	16	33
	II, ii	3	10
	II, iii	13	54
	III, i	26	61
	III, iii	16	54
	IV, ii	9	16
	IV, vi	20	43
	V, i	4	11
	V, iv	10	14
		124	312
JUNIUS BRUTUS	I, i	7	19
	II, i	20	58
	II, ii	6	14
	II, iii	10	56
	III, i	23	44
	III, iii	7	19
	IV, ii	7	10
	IV, vi	13	21
	V, i	2	4
		95	245
YOUNG MARTIUS	V, iii	1	2
ROMAN HERALD	II, i	2	6

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
TULLUS	I, ii	4	30
AUFIDIUS	I, viii	3	10
	I, x	4	32
	IV, v	7	56
	IV, vii	4	48
	V, ii	1	1
	V, iii	3	9
	V, vi	19	88
		45	274
LIEUTENANT	I, vii	1	1
	IV, vii	3	11
		4	12
1 CONSPIRATOR	V, vi	4	10
2 CONSPIRATOR	V, vi	4	9
3 CONSPIRATOR	V, vi	5	14
CITIZEN OF ANTIUM	IV, iv	3	4
1 WATCH	V, ii	12	30
2 WATCH	V, ii	6	11
VOLUMNIA	I, iii	11	47
	II, i	14	39
	III, ii	13	78
	IV, i	2	7
	IV, ii	9	34
	V, iii	8	103
		57	308
VIRGILIA	I, iii	16	22
	II, i	4	4
	IV, i	1	1
	IV, ii	2	4
	V, iii	3	6
		26	37
VALERIA	I, iii	13	38
	II, i	2	3
		15	41
GENTLEWOMAN	I, iii	1	1
1 SENATOR	I, i	4	7
(Volscian)	I, ii	3	7
(Volscian)	I, iv	1	8
	II, ii	5	13
	III, i	9	17
	III, ii	1	3
	III, iii	1	1
	V, v	1	6
		25	62
2 SENATOR (Volscian)	I, ii	2	7
(Roman)	II, ii	1	1
(Roman)	III, i	3	5
		6	13
A PATRICIAN	III, i	2	2
A NOBLE	III, ii	1	1
ÆDILE	III, i	1	1
	III, iii	8	9
	IV, vi	1	6
		10	16
1 SOLDIER	I, iv	4	7
	I, x	4	4
		8	11
2 SOLDIER	I, iv	1	1
1 CITIZEN	I, i	11	33
	II, iii	6	9
	III, i	1	3
	IV, vi	3	7
		21	52
2 CITIZEN	I, i	11	33
	II, iii	10	16
	IV, vi	2	2
		23	51
3 CITIZEN	II, iii	12	48
	IV, vi	1	4
		13	52
4 CITIZEN	II, iii	4	8
5 CITIZEN	II, iii	2	3
6 CITIZEN	II, iii	1	2
7 CITIZEN	II, iii	1	2
CITIZENS	II, iii	2	3
	III, i	9	10
	III, iii	5	7
	IV, vi	3	3
		19	23
1 MESSENGER	I, i	2	2
	I, iv	2	2
	I, vi	3	9
	II, i	1	9
	IV, vi	3	11
	V, iv	1	5
		12	38

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES			NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
2 MESSENGER	IV, vi	1	6	1 SERVINGMAN	IV, v	19	32
	V, iv	4	14	2 SERVINGMAN	IV, v	19	35
		5	20	3 SERVINGMAN	IV, v	20	49
VOLSCE	IV, iii	9	20	1 LORD	V, vi	6	15
				2 LORD	V, vi	6	12
				3 LORD	V, vi	4	5
1 ROMAN	I, v	1	1				
	IV, iii	10	26	ALL	I, i	6	8
		11	27		I, ii	2	2
					I, iv	2	2
					I, ix	1	1
2 ROMAN	I, v	1	1		II, i	1	1
3 ROMAN	I, v	1	1		II, iii	2	3
					V, v	1	2
1 OFFICER	II, ii	5	14		V, vi	1	3
2 OFFICER	II, ii	3	20			16	22

THE TRAGEDY OF CORIOLANUS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ[1]

CAIUS MARTIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS[2]
TITUS LARTIUS,[3] } generals against the Volscians
COMINIUS,[4] }
MENENIUS AGRIPPA,[5] friend to Coriolanus
SICINIUS VELUTUS,[6] } tribunes of the people
JUNIUS BRUTUS, }
Young MARTIUS, son to Coriolanus
Roman Herald
TULLUS AUFIDIUS,[7] general of the Volscians
Lieutenant to Aufidius
Conspirators with Aufidius
Citizen of Antium
Two Volscian Guards

VOLUMNIA, mother to Coriolanus
VIRGILIA, wife to Coriolanus
VALERIA, friend to Virgilia
Gentlewoman, attending on Virgilia

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and other Attendants

SCENE[8]: *Rome and the neighbourhood; Corioles*[9] *and the neighbourhood; Antium*[10]

[1] DRAMATIS PERSONÆ. Rowe was the first to give a list of the characters. His list was imperfect, and subsequent editors enlarged it.

[2] CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS. Pronounced 'kā'yus mar'shi-us co-ri-o-lā'nus.' 'Martius' is the form of the name as found in North's *Plutarch* and in the Folios. The classical form is 'Marcius,' which Rowe was the first to introduce into the text of Shakespeare.

[3] TITUS LARTIUS. Pronounced 'tī'tus lar'shi-us.'

[4] COMINIUS. Pronounced 'co-min'i-us.'

[5] MENENIUS AGRIPPA. Pronounced 'me-nē'ni-us a-grip'a.'

[6] SICINIUS VELUTUS. Pronounced 'si-sin'i-us ve-lu'tus.'

[7] TULLUS AUFIDIUS. Pronounced 'tul'us au-fid'i-us.'

[8] SCENE: *Rome . . . Antium* Camb | The Scene is partly in Rome and partly in the Territory of the Volscians Rowe | The Scene is partly in Rome and partly in the Territories of the Volscians and Antiates Theobald | Ff omit.

[9] *Corioles.* Pronounced 'ko-rī'o-les.' 'Corioles' is the form of the name as found in North's *Plutarch.* The Folios have 'Corioles,' with the variants 'Coriolus,' 'Corialus.' The classical form is 'Corioli,' which Pope was the first to introduce into an edition of Shakespeare.

[10] *Antium.* Pronounced 'an'shi-um.'

ACT I

SCENE I. *Rome. A street*

Enter a company of mutinous Citizens, *with staves, clubs, and other weapons*

1 CITIZEN. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

ALL. Speak, speak.

1 CITIZEN. You are all resolv'd rather to die than to famish?

ALL. Resolv'd, resolv'd.

1 CITIZEN. First, you know Caius Martius is chief enemy to the people.

ALL. We know 't, we know 't.

1 CITIZEN. Let us kill him, and we 'll have corn at our own price. Is 't a verdict?

ALL. No more talking on 't; let it be done: away, away!

2 CITIZEN. One word, good citizens.

ACT I. SCENE I | Actus Primus. Scæna Prima Ff.—*Rome. A street* Camb | A street in Rome Pope | Ff omit.

7. **Martius** Ff | Marcius Rowe (and throughout the play).

9. **We know 't, we know 't** F_1 | We know 't $F_2F_3F_4$.

For the dramatic construction and analysis of scenes, and the characters, see Introduction.

ACT I. SCENE I. In the Folios the play is divided into acts (given with Latin nomenclature) but not into scenes.

1 CITIZEN. We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good: what authority surfeits on would relieve us. If they would yield us but the superfluity while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge. 23

2 CITIZEN. Would you proceed especially against Caius Martius?

ALL. Against him first: he 's a very dog to the commonalty. 27

2 CITIZEN. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

16. **on** F_3F_4 | one F_1F_2. 22. **rakes** F_1 | raks F_2 | Racks F_3F_4.

15–23. "There grew sedition in the city, because the Senate did favour the rich against the people, who did complain of the sore oppression of usurers, of whom they borrowed money." — Plutarch.

16. **good**: rich. A play on the ordinary meaning of the word in line 14. With this meaning of 'good' cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, iii, 15–17: "my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient." — **authority**: those in authority. The use of the abstract for the concrete is very common in *Coriolanus*. So in lines 73, 206, 215, 216, 221, etc.

19–20. **the object of our misery**: our misery set before them as a spectacle. The general meaning is, Looking at us helps them to take stock of their wealth.

21. **sufferance**. Either (1) 'suffering' (cf. *Julius Cæsar*, II, i, 115), or (2) 'loss' (cf. *Othello*, II, i, 23).

22. In 'pikes' and 'rakes' we have a play on words. 'Pike' means both 'spear' and 'pitchfork.' Cf. the proverb, "as lean as a rake."

26. **a very dog**: brutal, unfeeling. So Kent calls Regan and Goneril "dog-hearted daughters" (*King Lear*, IV, iii, 47).

1 CITIZEN. Very well, and could be content to give him good report for 't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

2 CITIZEN. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

1 CITIZEN. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienc'd men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

2 CITIZEN. What he cannot help in his nature you account a vice in him: you must in no way say he is covetous.

1 CITIZEN. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations: he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' th' city is risen: why stay we prating here? to th' Capitol.

ALL. Come, come.

1 CITIZEN. Soft! who comes here?

33. 2 CITIZEN Malone | All Ff.

30–31. give him good report: speak well of him.

36–37. to please his mother. "And as for other, the only respect that made them valiant, was they hoped to have honour, but touching Martius, the only thing that made him to love honour was the joy he saw his mother did take of him." — Plutarch.

37. to be partly proud: partly to be proud. With the position of 'partly' compare that of 'only,' I, i, 230; 'almost,' I, ii, 24. Such transpositions are common. See Abbott, § 420.

38. virtue: valour, courage. The original (Latin) meaning. "Now in those days, valiantness was honoured in Rome above all other virtues: which they call *virtus*, by the name of virtue itself, as including . . . all other special virtues besides." — Plutarch.

42. repetition: recital. Cf. *Macbeth*, II, iii, 90.

44. Capitol. The temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, on the Capitoline hill, where the senate is represented as being assembled.

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA

2 CITIZEN. Worthy Menenius Agrippa, one that hath always lov'd the people.

1 CITIZEN. He 's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

MENENIUS. What work 's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you
With bats and clubs? The matter speak, I pray you.

2 CITIZEN. Our business is not unknown to th' senate: they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we 'll show 'em in deeds: they say poor suitors have strong breaths; they shall know we have strong arms too.

MENENIUS. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,
Will you undo yourselves?

2 CITIZEN. We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

MENENIUS. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you: for your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well

47. Scene II Pope.
51-52. Three lines in Ff, ending with 'hand,' 'matter,' 'you.'
52. With F_1 | with your $F_2F_3F_4$.
— matter | F_1F_2 | matter? Johnson.
53. 2 CITIZEN | 2 Cit. Ff | 1 Cit. Capell and most modern editors (throughout the scene).

47. **Menenius Agrippa.** "The Senate . . . did send unto them certain of the pleasantest old men, and the most acceptable to the people among them. Of those Menenius Agrippa was he, who was sent for chief man of the message from the Senate." — Plutarch.

53. "The 'First Citizen' is a hater of public men, — the 'Second' of public measures; the first would kill Coriolanus, — the second would repeal the laws relating to corn and usury. He says not one word against Coriolanus." — Knight.

Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them
Against the Roman state, whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder than can ever
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth,
The gods, not the patricians, make it, and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you, and you slander
The helms o' th' state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

2 CITIZEN. Care for us! True, indeed! they ne'er car'd for us yet: suffer us to famish, and their store-houses cramm'd with grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there 's all the love they bear us.

MENENIUS. Either you must
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,
Or be accus'd of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale: it may be you have heard it,

68. **your impediment**: hindrance on your part. Cf. *Othello*, V, ii, 263–264:

> I have made my way through more impediments
> Than twenty times your stop.

70. **Your knees to them, not arms**: you must make supplication to the gods and not insurrection against the state.

71–72. **transported . . . attends you**: carried away by calamity to do what can only bring further calamity.

73. **helms**: helmsmen. The abstract for the concrete.

77. **usury**. See quotation from Plutarch, lines 15–23.

But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale 't a little more.

2 CITIZEN. Well, I 'll hear it, sir: yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale: but, and 't please you, deliver.

MENENIUS. There was a time when all the body's members
Rebell'd against the belly; thus accus'd it:
That only like a gulf it did remain
I' th' midst o' th' body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
Like labour with the rest, where th' other instruments
Did see, and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection common
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd —

2 CITIZEN. Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

87. **stale** Theobald | scale Ff.
89. **and 't** Ff | an 't Hanmer.
95. **cupboarding** Pope | cupboarding Rowe | cubbording Ff.
100. **answer'd** — Rowe | answer'd. F_1F_4 | answer. F_2 | answers. F_3.

87. **stale**: make stale. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, II, ii, 240; *Julius Cæsar*, I, ii, 73. 'Scale,' the reading of the Folios, has been defended as meaning 'strip off the husk,' or it may be defended as meaning 'scatter,' a sense still common in English and Scottish dialect.

89. **fob off**: deceitfully put aside. Cf. 'fubb'd off,' *2 Henry IV*, II, i, 37; 'fobb'd' ('cheated,' 'deceived'), *1 Henry IV*, I, ii, 68. — **and**: if. Usually printed 'an' in modern editions.

95. **Still**: continually. So in II, i, 237; II, ii, 130; IV, i, 28. — **cupboarding**: putting into itself (as into a cupboard).

96. **where**: whereas. Frequently so. Cf. I, x, 13; *King Lear*, I, ii, 89.

98. **participate**: participating in each other's functions. In Elizabethan English, passive forms were often used for active and, conversely, active for passive. For forms in *-ate* and the omission of *-ed* after *d* and *t*, see Abbott, § 342.

99. **affection**: inclination. Cf. line 172; *Romeo and Juliet*, I, i, 133.

MENENIUS. Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile,
Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus
(For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak) it tauntingly replied
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt: even so most fitly,
As you malign our senators, for that
They are not such as you.
2 CITIZEN. Your belly's answer? What!
The kingly-crown'd head, the vigilant eye,
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other muniments and petty helps
In this our fabric, if that they —
MENENIUS. What then?
Fore me, this fellow speaks! What then? what then?
2 CITIZEN. Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,
Who is the sink o' th' body, —
MENENIUS. Well, what then?
2 CITIZEN. The former agents, if they did complain,
What could the belly answer?
MENENIUS. I will tell you,

105. **tauntingly** F_4 | taintinglyF1 | tantingly F_2F_3.

102. **smile.** "The belly . . . laughed at their folly." — Plutarch.

103. The lungs were regarded as the seat of laughter.

107. **his receipt**: what it received. 'Its' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day. See Abbott, § 228.

109. The heightened emotional intensity of the Second Citizen now finds expression in blank verse.

115. **Fore me.** A mild oath, probably softened down from 'before God.' Menenius resents the interruptions.

If you 'll bestow a small (of what you have little)
Patience awhile; you 'st hear the belly's answer.

2 CITIZEN. Ye 're long about it.

MENENIUS. Note me this, good friend;
Your most grave belly was deliberate,
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answered:
'True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he,
'That I receive the general food at first,
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the store-house and the shop
Of the whole body. But, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart, to th' seat o' th' brain,
And through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live. And though that all at once
You, my good friends' — this says the belly, mark me —

2 CITIZEN. Ay, sir; well, well.

MENENIUS. 'Though all at once cannot
See what I do deliver out to each,

121. **you 'st.** A provincialism, probably for 'you shall.'

122. **me**: for me. An ethical dative. See Abbott, § 220.

125. **incorporate**: united in one body. See note, line 98.

131. **th' seat o' th' brain**: "the kingly-crowned head, where reason has its throne, while the attendant passions keep their court in the heart."—Clar. Some editors take 'th' seat o' th' brain' to be in apposition with 'heart' and refer to 'the counsellor heart,' line 111.

132. **cranks and offices**: windings and apartments.

133. **nerves**: sinews. The words 'nerve,' 'vein,' 'artery,' and 'sinew' were often used interchangeably by Elizabethan writers.

136. **You . . . belly.** The Folios print this as a parenthesis.

Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran.' What say you to 't?

2 CITIZEN. It was an answer: how apply you this?

MENENIUS. The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members: for examine
Their counsels and their cares; disgest things rightly
Touching the weal o' th' common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you,
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly?

2 CITIZEN. I the great toe! Why the great toe?

MENENIUS. For that, being one o' th' lowest, basest, poorest
Of this most wise rebellion, thou goest foremost:
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,

140. flour | Flowre F_1F_2 | Flowr F_3F_4.

140. flour. The original meaning of 'flour' is 'flower (that is, finest part or quality) of meal.' See textual variants.

143–144. The fable of "The Belly and the Members" is found in collections attributed to Æsop, while a much earlier version exists in an Egyptian papyrus of the twentieth dynasty. It is also extant in the literatures of the Far East. Shakespeare was chiefly indebted to Plutarch, but he probably knew the version in Camden's *Remaines*, which has some points not in Plutarch. See Introduction, Sources.

145. disgest: digest. Both forms were common. 'Disgest' is still found in English and Scottish dialect.

146. weal o' th' common: common weal. Cf. II, iii, 176.

154. rascal . . . worst in blood to run. From the chase. A 'rascal' was a young, lean, or inferior deer, and hence not fitted to lead the herd. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, IV, ii, 48–49:

> If we be English deer, be then in blood,
> Not rascal-like to fall down with a pinch.

Lead'st first to win some vantage.
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.

Enter CAIUS MARTIUS

Hail, noble Martius!

MARTIUS. Thanks. What 's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?

1 CITIZEN. We have ever your good word.

MARTIUS. He that will give good words to thee will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like nor peace, nor war? the one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares:
Where foxes, geese you are: no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,

158. **bale** Theobald | baile F_1F_2 | bail F_3F_4. — Scene III Pope.
162. **thee** Ff | ye Dyce.
167. **geese you are: no** | Geese you are: No Ff | geese: you are no Camb Globe.

157. **rats**. The significance of the word is seen in lines 244–245.

158. **have bale**: meet with calamity. With 'bale' compare 'baleful.'

161. **scabs**. Literally and figuratively. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, III, iii, 106–107.

167. The modern punctuation (see textual variants) makes the form of expression more commonplace. — **surer**: more constant.

169–171. **Your virtue . . . did it**: you are good for nothing but to set value on those who are punished for their offences, and to curse the justice which punished them.

And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead,
And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! trust ye?
With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland. What 's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another? What 's their seeking?

MENENIUS. For corn at their own rates, whereof, they say,
The city is well stor'd.

MARTIUS. Hang 'em! They say!
They 'll sit by th' fire, and presume to know
What 's done i' th' Capitol: who 's like to rise,
Who thrives and who declines: side factions, and give out
Conjectural marriages, making parties strong,
And feebling such as stand not in their liking
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there 's grain enough!
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,

173. **sick man's** | sick mans F_4 | sickmans $F_1F_2F_3$.
179. **vile** F_4 | vilde $F_1F_2F_3$.
180. **these** Ff | the Rowe.

171. **that justice did it**: that justice which did it. For the apparent omission of the relative see Abbott, § 244.
179. **your garland**: garlanded by you. Cf. I, ix, 60.
188. **side**: countenance. Cf. the intransitive sense, IV, ii, 2.
190. **feebling**: treating as feeble, depreciating. Cf. *King John*, V, ii, 146: "Shall that victorious hand be feebled here."
192. **ruth**: pity, compassion. Cf. *Richard II*, III, iv, 106.

And let me use my sword, I 'd make a quarry
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
As I could pick my lance.

MENENIUS. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded:
For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
What says the other troop?

MARTIUS. They are dissolv'd: hang 'em!
They said they were an-hungry, sigh'd forth proverbs,
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not
Corn for the rich men only: with these shreds
They vented their complainings, which being answer'd
And a petition granted them, a strange one
(To break the heart of generosity,
And make bold power look pale) they threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o' th' moon,
Shouting their emulation.

209. **Shouting** Pope | Shooting Ff.

193–194. **I 'd . . . slaves**: I would quarter and make a quarry of thousands of these slaves. — **quarry**: a heap of game. A hunter's expression. — **quarter'd**. With this proleptic or anticipatory use of the perfect participle cf. 'cloven,' I, iv, 21.

195. **pick**: thrust, hurl, skin to 'pitch.' A variant is 'peck,' found in *Henry VIII*, V, iv, 94: "I 'll peck you o'er the pales else."

200. **proverbs**. "Proverbial expressions and trite sayings are the flowers of the rhetoric of a vulgar man. . . . A man of fashion never has recourse to proverbs and vulgar aphorisms." — Lord Chesterfield (Letter CLXIII).

206. **generosity**: nobility, those of noble birth. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, IV, vi, 13: "the generous and gravest citizens."

209. **Shouting their emulation**: rivaling each other in shouting.

MENENIUS. What is granted them?

MARTIUS. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice. One 's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not — 'S death!
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city
Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time
Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.

MENENIUS. This is strange.

MARTIUS. Go, get you home, you fragments!

Enter a Messenger *hastily*

MESSENGER. Where 's Caius Martius?

MARTIUS. Here: what 's the matter?

MESSENGER. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.

MARTIUS. I am glad on 't: then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders!

213. **unroof'd** Theobald | vnroo'ſt Ff (see note below).
216. **insurrection's** Theobald | Insurrections Ff.
219, 223, etc. **Volsces** | Volcies $F_1F_2F_3$ | Volscies F_4.

212. **and I know not.** Plutarch names but two; hence Shakespeare's lack of knowledge. — **'S death:** God's death. A petty oath.

213. The similarity of the old form of the letter *s* with that of *f* readily accounts for the typographical error in the Folios shown in the textual variants.

215–216. **Win upon power:** encroach upon those in power, the aristocracy. The abstract for the concrete. See note, line 16. — **themes For insurrection's arguing:** subjects of argument for those who make an insurrection.

217. **fragments.** Cf. 'tag-rag people,' *Julius Cæsar*, I, ii, 256.

221. **musty superfluity:** superfluity of plebeians that have gone bad. Apparently a play on the "superfluity while it were wholesome," mentioned in line 17, although Martius was not present when that speech was made.

Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, *and other* Senators; JUNIUS BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS VELUTUS

1 SENATOR. Martius, 't is true that you have lately told us:
The Volsces are in arms.
MARTIUS. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't.
I sin in envying his nobility;
And were I any thing but what I am,
I would wish me only he.
COMINIUS. You have fought together?
MARTIUS. Were half to half the world by the ears, and he
Upon my party, I 'd revolt to make
Only my wars with him. He is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.
1 SENATOR. Then, worthy Martius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.
COMINIUS. It is your former promise.
MARTIUS. Sir, it is,
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What, art thou stiff? Stand 'st out?
TITUS. No, Caius Martius;
I 'll lean upon one crutch, and fight with t' other,
Ere stay behind this business.

222. *Enter* . . . Senators | Enter Sicinius Velutus, Annius (Junius F4) Brutus Cominius (Cominisn F1), Titus Lartius (Lucius F4), with other Senatours Ff. — Scene IV Pope. 234. **Lartius** Rowe | Lucius Ff.

224. **put you to 't**: give you work enough. A colloquialism.

229. **Upon my party**: on my side. Cf. I, x, 7.

230. **Only my wars with him**: my wars with him only. Such transpositions are common. Cf. line 37. See Abbott, § 420.

MENENIUS. O, true-bred!

1 SENATOR. Your company to th' Capitol, where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.

TITUS. [*To* COMINIUS] Lead you on.
[*To* MARTIUS] Follow Cominius; we must follow you,
Right worthy you priority.

COMINIUS. Noble Martius.

1 SENATOR. [*To the* Citizens] Hence to your homes; be gone!

MARTIUS. Nay, let them follow:
The Volsces have much corn: take these rats thither
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners,
Your valour puts well forth: pray, follow.

[Citizens *steal away. Exeunt all but* SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS]

SICINIUS. Was ever man so proud as is this Martius?

BRUTUS. He has no equal.

SICINIUS. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

BRUTUS. Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

SICINIUS. Nay, but his taunts.

BRUTUS. Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the gods.

SICINIUS. Bemock the modest moon.

239, 243. 1 SENATOR | Sen. Ff. | prose in Ff.
240, 241. [*To* COMINIUS] [*To* MARTIUS] Camb | Ff omit.
240–242. Lead you . . . you priority
243. [*To the* Citizens] Ff omit.
246. [. . . *Exeunt* . . . BRUTUS] Manent (Manet F1) Sicin. and Brutus Ff.

245. mutiners. Cf. 'enginer,' *Hamlet*, III, iv, 206; 'pioner,' *Othello*, III, iii, 346. See Abbott, § 443.

245–246. The valour of the plebeians will display itself in gnawing the garners of the Volsces. The figure in 'puts forth' is seen in *Henry VIII*, III, ii, 352–353:

to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes, to-morrow blossoms.

251. gird: jest at, taunt. The original sense is to strike.

BRUTUS. The present wars devour him! he is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

SICINIUS. Such a nature,
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon, but I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

BRUTUS. Fame, at the which he aims,
In whom already he 's well grac'd, cannot
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by
A place below the first: for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To th' utmost of a man, and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Martius: 'O, if he
Had borne the business.'

SICINIUS. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Martius, shall
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

BRUTUS. Come:
Half all Cominius' honours are to Martius,

253. **The present . . . devour him**: may the present wars destroy him! Optative rather than indicative. Some editors explain this as an assertion: "the present wars eat up his gentler qualities."— Steevens. "The wars absorb him wholly." — Clarke.

254. **to be**: of being. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, i, 127: "Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd." See Abbott, § 356.

255. **success**: that which follows, outcome, result. So in I, vi, 7; V, i, 62. In I, ix, 75; II, ii, 41, the word has its ordinary meaning.

259. **whom**: which. Cf. III, ii, 119. See Abbott, § 264.

267. **demerits**: merits. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. *Othello*, I, ii, 22. In *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 226, the word has its usual meaning. "In Romanic the prefix appears to have been taken in a privative sense." — Murray. 'Due merits' is a suggested emendation.

Though Martius earn'd them not; and all his faults
To Martius shall be honours, though indeed
In aught he merit not.

SICINIUS. Let 's hence, and hear
How the dispatch is made; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.

BRUTUS. Let 's along. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *Corioles. The Senate-house*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS *with* Senators

1 SENATOR. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are ent'red in our counsels,
And know how we proceed.

AUFIDIUS. Is it not yours?
What ever have been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention? 'T is not four days gone

SCENE II Rowe | Scene V Pope | Ff omit. — *Corioles* | Ff omit. — *The Senate-house* Pope Capell | Ff omit.

1. *Enter* . . . *with* Senators | with Senators of Coriolus Ff.
4. on F_3F_4 | one F_1F_2.

272–273. **How the dispatch is made**: with what form of commission the generals are sent to the war. — **in what . . . his singularity**: in what style or character other than his usual assumption of superiority. 'Singularity' here has reference to characteristic behaviour.

2. **in**: into. In Old English 'in' meant 'in' when used with the dative, and 'into' when used with the accusative. Remnants of 'in' meaning 'into' still exist in such phrases as 'cut in two,' 'fall in love.'

4. **What**: what counsels. It refers back to line 2. — **have.** The reading of the First Folio; the other Folios have 'hath.'

5. **bodily act**: accomplished fact.

6. **Had circumvention**: found a way to frustrate them.

Since I heard thence: these are the words; I think
I have the letter here; yes, here it is:
[*Reads*] 'They have press'd a power, but it is not known
Whether for east or west: the dearth is great;
The people mutinous: and it is rumour'd,
Cominius, Martius your old enemy
(Who is of Rome worse hated than of you),
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation
Whither 't is bent: most likely 't is for you:
Consider of it.'

1 SENATOR. Our army 's in the field:
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.

AUFIDIUS. Nor did you think it folly
To keep your great pretences veil'd till when

9. [*Reads*] Camb | Reading Theobald | Ff omit.

9. press'd a power: levied a force. "The common people, being set on a broil and bravery with these words, would not appear when the Consuls called their names by a bill, to prest them for the wars. . . . Martius then, who was now grown to great credit, and a stout man besides, and of great reputation with the noblest men of Rome, rose up, and openly spake against these flattering Tribunes . . . but to the wars the people by no means would be brought or constrained."—Plutarch. With 'press'd' compare *Richard II*, III, ii, 58–59:

> For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd,
> To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown.

15. preparation: military force. Cf. *Othello*, I, iii, 221–222: "The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus."

20. pretences: intentions. Cf. *Macbeth*, II, iii, 136–138:

> In the great hand of God I stand, and thence,
> Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight
> Of treasonous malice.

They needs must show themselves; which in the hatching,
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be short'ned in our aim, which was
To take in many towns ere almost Rome
Should know we were afoot.

2 SENATOR. Noble Aufidius,
Take your commission; hie you to your bands:
Let us alone to guard Corioles:
If they set down before 's, for the remove
Bring up your army: but, I think, you 'll find
They 've not prepar'd for us.

AUFIDIUS. O, doubt not that;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
Some parcels of their power are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.
If we and Caius Martius chance to meet,
'T is sworn between us, we shall ever strike
Till one can do no more.

ALL. The gods assist you!

AUFIDIUS. And keep your honours safe!

1 SENATOR. Farewell.

2 SENATOR. Farewell.

ALL. Farewell. [*Exeunt*]

27. **Corioles** F_1 | Coriolus $F_2F_3F_4$ | Corioli Pope. (So in I, iii, 96, etc.)
30. **They 've** | Th' haue Ff.
38. [*Exeunt*] Exeunt omnes Ff.

24. **take in**: capture. The 'in' is intensive, and the expression implies 'take into one's own hands.' Cf. III, ii, 59; *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, i, 22–23. — **ere almost Rome**: almost before Rome. Cf. I, i, 37, 230. "Such transpositions are most natural and frequent in the case of adverbs of limitation." — Abbott.

28–29. **If they . . . your army**: if the Romans besiege us, bring up your army to remove them.

SCENE III. *Rome. A room in* MARTIUS' *house*

Enter VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA: *they set them down on two low stools, and sew*

VOLUMNIA. I pray you, daughter, sing, or express yourself in a more comfortable sort: if my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied, and the only son of my womb; when youth with comeliness pluck'd all gaze his way; when, for a day of kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding, I, considering how honour would become such a person, that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleas'd to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him; from whence he return'd, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man. 15

SCENE III Rowe | Scene VI Pope | Ff omit.—*Rome* Rowe | Ff omit.—*A room . . . house* Capell | Ff omit.

1. *Enter* VOLUMNIA . . . *they set them down* . . . Rowe | Enter Volumnia and Virgilia, mother and wife to Martius: They set them downe . . . Ff.

3. **should** $F_1F_2F_3$ | would F_4.

2. **comfortable**: comforting. "Adjectives in *-ble* were originally active (and neuter) as well as passive. Many of the former exist in English, e.g. *capable*, *comfortable*, *suitable* . . . but the majority have become obsolete or remain only with a passive force, as in *credible*, *audible*, *flexible*, which is also the only use of *-able* as a living formative." — Murray. See Abbott, § 3.

12. **war**. The battle of Lake Regillus. "Hereupon, after the battle was won, the Dictator . . . crowned Martius with a garland of oaken boughs. For whosoever saveth the life of a Roman, it is the manner among them, to honour him with such a garland." — Plutarch.

VIRGILIA. But had he died in the business, madam, how then?

VOLUMNIA. Then his good report should have been my son: I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Martius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Enter a Gentlewoman

GENTLEWOMAN. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

VIRGILIA. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

VOLUMNIA. Indeed, you shall not.
Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum;
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair;
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him:
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus:
'Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome'; his bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,
Like to a harvest-man that 's task'd to mow
Or all, or lose his hire.

VIRGILIA. His bloody brow! O Jupiter, no blood!

VOLUMNIA. Away, you fool! it more becomes a man
Than gilt his trophy. The breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier

31. **on, you** F_1F_2 | on ye F_3F_4. what 's F_3F_4.
34. **that 's** | thats F_2 | that F_1 | 35. **lose** F_3F_4 | loose F_1F_2.

25. **Beseech**: I beseech. — **retire myself.** The reflexive use of verbs was common in Elizabethan English. See Abbott, § 296.

Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood
At Grecian sword contending: tell Valeria,
We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit* Gentlewoman]

VIRGILIA. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

VOLUMNIA. He 'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

Enter VALERIA *with an* Usher *and a* Gentlewoman

VALERIA. My ladies both, good day to you.

VOLUMNIA. Sweet madam.

VIRGILIA. I am glad to see your ladyship.

VALERIA. How do you both? You are manifest housekeepers. What are you sewing here? A fine spot in good faith. How does your little son?

VIRGILIA. I thank your ladyship: well, good madam.

VOLUMNIA. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

VALERIA. O' my word, the father's son: I 'll swear 't is a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I look'd upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: has such a confirm'd countenance.

41. **sword contending: tell**] sword. *Contenning*, tell F_1] swordes *Contending:* tell F_2] swords Contending: tell F_3] swords contending: tell F_4] sword, contemning. Tell Camb] swords' contending. — Tell Capell.

41. **sword contending: tell.** As the variants show, this is one of the textual difficulties of the play. The First Folio reading would suggest that 'Contenning' is the name of a servant (cf. 'Cotus,' IV, v, 3), proper names being almost invariably italicized. Some editors take 'Contenning' as a corrupted stage direction.

49–50. **house-keepers.** Possibly a play on the word in the sense of 'stayers at home.' With this meaning compare *Cymbeline*, III, iii, 1. — **fine spot**: delicate pattern in embroidery. Desdemona's handkerchief was "spotted with strawberries," *Othello*, III, iii, 435.

57. **confirm'd**: resolute, determined. Frequently so.

I saw him run after a gilded butterfly, and when he caught it, he let it go again, and after it again, and over and over he comes, and up again: catch'd it again: or whether his fall enrag'd him, or how 't was, he did so set his teeth, and tear it. O, I warrant how he mammock'd it.

VOLUMNIA. One on 's father's moods.

VALERIA. Indeed, la, 't is a noble child.

VIRGILIA. A crack, madam.

VALERIA. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

VIRGILIA. No, good madam, I will not out of doors.

VALERIA. Not out of doors!

VOLUMNIA. She shall, she shall.

VIRGILIA. Indeed, no, by your patience; I 'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

VALERIA. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

VIRGILIA. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers: but I cannot go thither.

VOLUMNIA. Why, I pray you?

VIRGILIA. 'T is not to save labour, nor that I want love.

VALERIA. You would be another Penelope: yet they say all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca

63. **on 's** $F_1F_2F_3$ | o 's F_4. 80. **yarn** F_3F_4 | yearne F_1F_2. — **Ithaca** F_3F_4 | Athica F_1F_2.
68. Two lines in Ff.

58. **gilded**. The epithet "hints at the superficial gloriousness of Coriolanus' ideal." — E. K. Chambers.

62. **mammock'd**: tore to pieces. Still heard in dialect.

65. **crack**: lively lad. So in Shallow's account of the boy Jack Falstaff, *2 Henry IV*, III, ii, 32–34: "I see him break Skogan's head at the court-gate, when a was a crack, not thus high."

79. Shakespeare's only allusion to the wife of Ulysses.

full of moths. Come; I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

VIRGILIA. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

VALERIA. In truth, la, go with me, and I 'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

VIRGILIA. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

VALERIA. Verily, I do not jest with you: there came news from him last night.

VIRGILIA. Indeed, madam?

VALERIA. In earnest, it 's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volsces have an army forth, against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power. Your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioles; they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour, and so, I pray, go with us.

VIRGILIA. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

VOLUMNIA. Let her alone, lady: as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

101-107. Irregular verse in Ff.

81. **moths**. A play on words. The 'moths' are the suitors that gathered about Penelope, the word suggesting also the long period of her waiting for the return of Ulysses. — **sensible**: sensitive. For forms in *-ble* see note, line 2.

96. **nothing doubt**: do not for a moment doubt.

102. **disease**: deprive of ease, disquiet. The original meaning. 'Disease' in this sense is probably the correct reading in *Macbeth*, V, iii, 21. — **our better mirth**: our mirth that would be better without her. 'Better' is proleptic. See note on 'quarter'd,' I, i, 193–194.

VALERIA. In troth I think she would: fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us.

VIRGILIA. No, at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

VALERIA. Well, then, farewell. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV. *Before Corioles*

Enter, with drum and colours, MARTIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Captains *and* Soldiers: *to them a* Messenger

MARTIUS. Yonder comes news: a wager they have met.

LARTIUS. My horse to yours, no.

MARTIUS. 'T is done.

LARTIUS. Agreed.

MARTIUS. Say, has our general met the enemy?

MESSENGER. They lie in view, but have not spoke as yet.

LARTIUS. So, the good horse is mine.

MARTIUS. I 'll buy him of you.

LARTIUS. No, I 'll nor sell nor give him: lend you him I will For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

105. o' Theobald | a Ff.
108. [*Exeunt*] Exeunt Ladies Ff.
SCENE IV Rowe|Scene VII Pope | Ff omit. — *Before Corioles* | The walls of Coriolus Rowe | Ff omit.
1. *Enter* . . . Soldiers | Enter Martius, Titus Lartius, with Drumme and Colours, with Captaines and Souldiers, as before the City Coriolus (Corialus F1) Ff.

106. **at a word**: once for all. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, II, i, 118.

1–7. In Plutarch no mention is made of a wager, but after the battle, as in I, ix, 60–62, Cominius presents Coriolanus with a "noble steed . . . with all his trim belonging."

7. **Summon the town**: summon the town to surrender.

MARTIUS. How far off lie these armies?
MESSENGER. Within this mile and half.
MARTIUS. Then shall we hear their larum, and they ours.
Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence
To help our fielded friends. Come, blow thy blast.

They sound a parley: enter two Senators *with others on the walls of Corioles*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?
1 SENATOR. No, nor a man that fears you less than he,
That 's lesser than a little. [*Drum afar off.*] Hark! our drums
Are bringing forth our youth: we 'll break our walls
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes;
They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum far off.*] Hark you, far off!
There is Aufidius. List, what work he makes
Amongst your cloven army.
MARTIUS. O, they are at it!
LARTIUS. Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

19. [*Alarum . . .*] In Ff after 'far off.'

9. **larum.** An aphetic form of 'alarum,' call to arms.

12. **fielded**: in the field. Cf. 'ague,' line 38; 'servanted,' V, ii, 77.

14–15. "The Coriolans, making small account of them that lay in camp before the city, made a sally out upon them." — Plutarch.

17. **pound us up**: pen us up as in a pound. Cf. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I, i, 110.

21. **cloven army.** "The Consul Cominius . . . divided his army also into two parts; and taking the one part with himself, he marched towards them that were drawing to the city, out of the country: and the other part of his army he left in the camp with Titus Lartius (one of the valiantest men the Romans had at that time) to resist those that would make any sally out of the city upon them." — Plutarch.

Enter the army of the Volsces

MARTIUS. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus,
They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,
Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my fellows!
He that retires, I 'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge. [*Exit* MARTIUS]

Alarum. The Romans *are beat back to their trenches.*
Re-enter MARTIUS, *cursing*

MARTIUS. All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome! you herd of boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd
Farther than seen, and one infect another
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!

30. Scene VIII Pope. F1F2 | Herd of Biles F3F4 | herd of— Boils Johnson Camb Globe.
31. **herd of boils** | Heard of Byles

30. Shakespeare always refers to the south wind as hurtful.

31–32. **you herd . . . Plaster you o'er.** The impulsive thought of the speaker expresses itself in condensed diction, in which 'boils and plagues' stands both in the vocative with 'you herd' and as the subject of the verb 'plaster.' Johnson's punctuation (see textual variants) destroys the spirit of the passage. Schmidt puts a comma after 'plagues' and calls 'plaster' a reflexive.

36–42. "But Martius . . . slew the first enemies he met withal, . . crying out to the Romans that had turned their backs, and calling them again to fight with a loud voice. For he was even such another, as Cato would have a soldier and a captain to be, not only terrible and fierce to lay about him, but to make the enemy afeard with the sound of his voice, and grimness of his countenance." — Plutarch.

All hurt behind, backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agued fear! Mend, and charge home,
Or, by the fires of heaven, I 'll leave the foe,
And make my wars on you: look to 't. Come on,
If you 'll stand fast, we 'll beat them to their wives,
As they us to our trenches followed.

Another alarum. The Volsces *fly, and* Martius *follows them to the gates*

So, now the gates are ope: now prove good seconds:
'T is for the followers fortune widens them,
Not for the fliers: mark me, and do the like.

[*Enters the gates*]

1 Soldier. Fool-hardiness, not I.

2 Soldier. Nor I.

[Martius *is shut in*]

1 Soldier. See, they have shut him in.

[*Alarum continues*]

All. To th' pot, I warrant him.

42. followed $F_2F_3F_4$ | followes F_1.
43. *Another . . . gates* Camb | Another Alarum, and Martius followes them to gates, and is shut in F_1F_2.

38. **agued fear**: fear which has the effect of ague. Cf. *Richard II*, III, ii, 190: "This ague fit of fear is over-blown."

43. **seconds**: support. Cf. I, viii, 15.

43–45. "And there perceiving that the Romans retired back, . . . and that there was not one man amongst them that durst venture himself to follow the flying enemies into their city, . . . he did encourage his fellows with words and deeds, crying out to them, that fortune had opened the gates of the city, more for the followers than the fliers." — Plutarch.

47. **To th' pot**: to certain ruin. Cut in pieces like meat for the pot. Murray quotes from Udall (1542), *Erasm. Apoph.* 116: "The riche & welthie of his subjectes went dayly to the potte, & wer chopped up."

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS

LARTIUS. What is become of Martius?
ALL. Slain, sir, doubtless.
1 SOLDIER. Following the fliers at the very heels,
With them he enters: who, upon the sudden,
Clapp'd to their gates: he is himself alone,
To answer all the city.
LARTIUS. O noble fellow!
Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,
And when it bows, stands up. Thou art left, Martius:
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous, and did tremble.

Re-enter MARTIUS, *bleeding, assaulted by the enemy*

1 SOLDIER. Look, sir.
LARTIUS. O, 't is Martius!
Let 's fetch him off, or make remain alike.
[*They fight, and all enter the city*]

53. **sensibly outdares** Ff | sensible, outdoes Theobald | sensible, outdares Johnson.
54. **stands** Rowe | stand 'st Ff.
57. **Cato's** Theobald | *Calues* F1 | *Calves* F2F3F4.

53. **sensibly . . . senseless.** A touch of euphuism. Steevens quotes Sidney's *Arcadia:* "Their flesh abode the wounds constantly, as though it were lesse sensible of smart than the senselesse armour."
57. **Cato's wish.** See note, lines 36–42. Cato lived more than two centuries later than the period of this play.
62. **remain.** For 'remain' as a noun cf. *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 148.

SCENE V. *Corioles. A street*

Enter certain ROMANS, *with spoils*

1 ROMAN. This will I carry to Rome.

2 ROMAN. And I this.

3 ROMAN. A murrain on 't! I took this for silver.

[*Exeunt. Alarum continues still afar off*]

Enter MARTIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS *with a* Trumpet

MARTIUS. See here these movers that do prize their hours
At a crack'd drachma! Cushions, leaden spoons,
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up: down with them!
And hark, what noise the general makes! To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take

SCENE V Capell. — *Corioles. A street* | Ff omit.
5. **drachma** Singer | Drachme F_1 F_2 | Drachm F_3F_4 | dram Staunton.
7. **them, these** F_4 | them, These F_3 | them. These F_1F_2.

4. *with a* Trumpet: accompanied by a trumpeter. — **movers**: miserable creatures (straggling about after plunder). For 'mover' in a good sense cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 368: "O fairest mover on this mortal round." — **prize their hours**: value their time.

5. **crack'd drachma**. The drachma is a silver Greek coin worth about a franc. A cracked drachma was not current. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 447–448.

6. **Irons of a doit**: pieces of iron not worth a farthing. Cf. IV, iv, 17.

8. "The city being taken in this sort, the most part of the soldiers began incontinently to spoil, to carry away, and to look up the booty they had won. But Martius was marvellous angry with them, and cried out on them, that it was no time now to look after spoil, and to run straggling here and there to enrich themselves." — Plutarch.

Convenient numbers to make good the city;
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

LARTIUS. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;
Thy exercise hath been too violent
For a second course of fight.

MARTIUS. Sir, praise me not:
My work hath yet not warm'd me. Fare you well:
The blood I drop is rather physical
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
I will appear and fight.

LARTIUS. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
Fall deep in love with thee, and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!

MARTIUS. Thy friend no less
Than those she placeth highest! So, farewell.

LARTIUS. Thou worthiest Martius! [*Exit* MARTIUS]
Go sound thy trumpet in the market-place;
Call thither all the officers o' th' town,
Where they shall know our mind. Away! [*Exeunt*]

25. [*Exit* MARTIUS] Ff omit.

12. make good: hold. Cf. *Cymbeline*, V, iii, 23.

18. physical: medicinal, salutary. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, II, i, 261.

20–23. In Plutarch the prayer is put into the mouth of Martius: "Oft holding up his hands to heaven, he besought the gods to be gracious and favourable unto him, that he might come in time to the battle, and in a good hour to hazard his life in defence of his countrymen."

23–24. Thy friend . . . highest: prosperity be thy friend no less than she is the friend of those she placeth highest.

26–28. Addressed to the trumpeter. See note, line 4.

Scene VI. *Near the camp of* Cominius

Enter Cominius *as it were in retire, with* Soldiers

Cominius. Breathe you, my friends: well fought; we are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs,
We shall be charg'd again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods,
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encount'ring,
May give you thankful sacrifice! Thy news?

Enter a Messenger

Messenger. The citizens of Corioles have issued,
And given to Lartius and to Martius battle:
I saw our party to their trenches driven,
And then I came away.

Cominius. Though thou speakest truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is 't since?

Messenger. Above an hour, my lord.

Cominius. 'T is not a mile: briefly we heard their drums.

Scene VI Capell | Scene IX Pope. — *Near* . . . Cominius | Ff omit. 4. **struck** F4 | strooke F1F2 | strook F3. 6. **Ye** Hanmer | The Ff. 13. **speakest** Ff | speak'st Rowe Camb. — **truth** Ff | true Capell. 16. **briefly** Ff | briefly, Theobald.

5. Now and then, as gusts of wind conveyed the noise.

9. **Thy news?** Addressed to the messenger, whom he catches sight of before the audience does.

16. **briefly**: "within a short time (measured either backward or forward)." — Murray.

How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,
And bring thy news so late?

MESSENGER. Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel
Three or four miles about, else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.

Enter MARTIUS

COMINIUS. Who 's yonder,
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods!
He has the stamp of Martius, and I have
Before-time seen him thus.

MARTIUS. Come I too late?

COMINIUS. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor
More than I know the sound of Martius' tongue
From every meaner man.

MARTIUS. Come I too late?

COMINIUS. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.

MARTIUS. O, let me clip ye
In arms as sound as when I woo'd in heart;

17. **confound**: waste. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 100–101.

22. **as he were flay'd**: as he would appear were he flayed. 'As' in Shakespeare does not mean 'as if.' The 'if' is implied in the subjunctive. See Abbott, § 107. Cf. I, i, 208; *2 Henry VI*, I, i, 103.

29. **clip**: clasp. Cf. IV, v, 109; *Othello*, III, iii, 464: "You elements that clip us round about."

30. In arms as sound as I was in heart when I wooed. The semicolon at the end of the line is the punctuation of the Folios. Almost all modern editors place it after 'woo'd.' For 'sound' used of the heart and love cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, V, ii, 415: "My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw"; *The Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 389: "This shows a sound affection."

As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward.

COMINIUS. Flower of warriors,
How is 't with Titus Lartius?

MARTIUS. As with a man busied about decrees:
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him, or pitying, threat'ning the other;
Holding Corioles in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.

COMINIUS. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where is he? Call him hither.

MARTIUS. Let him alone;
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,
The common file (a plague! tribunes for them!)
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.

COMINIUS. But how prevail'd you?

MARTIUS. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think:
Where is the enemy? Are you lords o' th' field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?

COMINIUS. Martius,

43. **plague! tribunes** Rowe|plague-Tribunes F_1F_2. 46. **tell?** F_3F_4 | tell, F_1F_2. — **think:** Ff | think. Camb.

36. **Ransoming him, or pitying:** accepting ransom of the one, or letting him go through pity. With 'him' compare 'his,' *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 79–80:

> I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
> Desire his jewels, and this other's house.

42. **but for:** had it not been for. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, iv, 6. The words may also mean 'but as for,' with 'gentlemen' used ironically for 'the common file,' the plebeians.

We have at disadvantage fought, and did
Retire to win our purpose.

MARTIUS. How lies their battle? Know you on which side
They have plac'd their men of trust?

COMINIUS. As I guess, Martius,
Their bands i' th' vaward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust: o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.

MARTIUS. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows
We have made to endure friends, that you directly
Set me against Aufidius, and his Antiates,
And that you not delay the present, but,
Filling the air with swords advanc'd and darts,
We prove this very hour.

COMINIUS. Though I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath,
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking: take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.

53. **Antiates** Pope | Antients F_1F_2 | Ancients F_3F_4.

51. battle: battalion, army. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, IV, i, 179. "Martius asked him how the order of their enemy's battle was, and on which side they had placed their best fighting men." — Plutarch.

53. vaward: vanguard. The same word is in Plutarch. Cf. *Henry V*, IV, iii, 130. — **Antiates**. Pronounced 'an'ti-ates' (classically, 'an-ti-a'tes'). Pope's correction of the Folios (see textual variants) is supported by line 59 and the corresponding passage in Plutarch: "those of the Antiates whom they esteemed to be the warlikest men."

58–59. directly Set me. "Then prayed Martius to be set directly against them." — Plutarch.

MARTIUS. Those are they
That most are willing. If any such be here
(As it were sin to doubt) that love this painting
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country 's dearer than himself;
Let him alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus to express his disposition,
And follow Martius.

[*They all shout and wave their swords, take him up in their arms, and cast up their caps*]

O, me alone! make you a sword of me:
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? None of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select from all: the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march,
And four shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclin'd.

70. Lesser F_3F_4 | Lessen F_1F_2. 81. the rest | Ff print in line 82.

69–70. **fear Lesser his person**: fear less for his person.

76. In the previous editions of Hudson's Shakespeare 'Go we along' was substituted for the 'Oh me alone' of the Folios. Capell punctuated the line as a question. Martius, swordlike, has himself already pierced the enemy; finding his men now eager for the fray, he bids them make him the sword that they are to use.

83. **As cause will be obey'd**: as occasion shall require.

84. **four**. 'I' and 'some' have been suggested as emendations, but Coriolanus refers to subordinate officers.

COMINIUS. March on, my fellows:
Make good this ostentation, and you shall
Divide in all with us. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE VII. *The gates of Corioles*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioles, going with drum and trumpet toward* COMINIUS *and* CAIUS MARTIUS, *enters with a* Lieutenant, *other* Soldiers, *and a* Scout

LARTIUS. So, let the ports be guarded; keep your duties
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries to our aid; the rest will serve
For a short holding: if we lose the field
We cannot keep the town.
LIEUTENANT. Fear not our care, sir.
LARTIUS. Hence, and shut your gates upon 's:
Our guider, come; to the Roman camp conduct us. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE VIII. *A field of battle*

Alarum as in battle. Enter, from opposite sides, MARTIUS *and* AUFIDIUS

MARTIUS. I 'll fight with none but thee, for I do hate thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.

SCENE VII Capell | Scene X Pope. — *The gates of Corioles* | Gates of Coriole Capell | Ff omit.
7. [*Exeunt*] Exit Ff.

SCENE VIII Capell | Scene XI Pope. — *A . . . battle* | Ff omit.
1. *Enter . . .* | Enter Martius and Auffidius at several doores Ff.

86. ostentation: demonstration of courage.

1. ports: gates. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. V, vi, 6.

3. centuries: companies of a hundred. The leader was usually called a centurion. Cf. *Matthew*, viii, 5.

AUFIDIUS. We hate alike:
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame and envy: fix thy foot.
MARTIUS. Let the first budger die the other's slave,
And the gods doom him after!
AUFIDIUS. If I fly, Martius,
Holloa me like a hare.
MARTIUS. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioles walls,
And made what work I pleas'd: 't is not my blood
Wherein thou seest me mask'd, for thy revenge
Wrench up thy power to th' highest.
AUFIDIUS. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,
Thou shouldst not scape me here.

[*Here they fight, and certain* Volsces *come in the aid of* AUFIDIUS. MARTIUS *fights till they be driven in breathless*]

Officious, and not valiant, you have sham'd me
In your condemned seconds. [*Exeunt*]

4. **and envy** Ff | I envy Collier.
6–7. **If . . . hare** | one line in Ff.
7. **Holloa** | hollow Ff.
15. [*Exeunt*] Ff omit.

4. **fame and envy**. These words are really characteristic of both men. Each has fame and is jealous of the other; and so each hates the other for two reasons, his fame and his jealousy.

8. **your Corioles walls**. Cf. 'Corioles gates,' II, i, 154; 'our Rome gates,' III, iii, 104. See Abbott, § 22.

12. **progeny**: lineage, race, family. The original (Latin) meaning. The Trojans were the boasted ancestors of the Romans, and Hector was bravest of them all. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, II, iv, 236–237: "thou art as valorous as Hector of Troy, worth five of Agamemnon."

14–15. Officious in your interference, you have put me to shame by your damnable support. Aufidius addresses the Volsces.

SCENE IX. *The Roman camp*

Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Enter, at one door, COMINIUS *with the* Romans: *at another door,* MARTIUS, *with his arm in a scarf*

COMINIUS. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou 'lt not believe thy deeds: but I 'll report it,
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,
Where great patricians shall attend, and shrug,
I' th' end admire: where ladies shall be frighted,
And, gladly quak'd, hear more: where the dull tribunes,
That with the fusty plebeians hate thine honours,
Shall say against their hearts, 'We thank the gods
Our Rome hath such a soldier!'
Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast,
Having fully din'd before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, *with his power, from the pursuit*

LARTIUS. O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison:
Hadst thou beheld —

MARTIUS. Pray now, no more: my mother,
Who has a charter to extol her blood,

SCENE IX Capell. — *The . . . camp* | Ff omit. 2. **Thou 'lt** F_4 | Thou't $F_1F_2F_3$. 13-14. **my . . . blood** | one line in Ff.

6. gladly quak'd: liking to be made to quake.

7. plebeians. Pronounced 'plē'be-ans,' as in III, i, 101; V, iv, 35; *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, xii, 34; but 'ple-bē'ans' in *Titus Andronicus*, I, i, 231; *Henry V*, V, Prologue, 27.

10–11. The fight with Aufidius is but a trifle compared with the taking of Corioles.

14. charter: right, privilege. — **blood**: flesh and blood, offspring.

When she does praise me grieves me: I have done
As you have done; that 's what I can: induc'd
As you have been; that 's for my country:
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.

COMINIUS. You shall not be
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know
The value of her own: 't were a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings; and to silence that
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
Would seem but modest: therefore, I beseech you
(In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done) before our army hear me.

MARTIUS. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear themselves rememb'red.

COMINIUS. Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,
Whereof we have ta'en good, and good store, of all
The treasure in this field achiev'd and city,

33. achiev'd | atchieved Ff.

18–19. **He that . . . mine act**: he that has carried out his purpose (done his best) has done as much as I.

21–25. It were no less than stealing and defamation to hide what you have done, and be silent about that which, if vouched for with the highest praises, would seem but modestly praised.

29. **To hear**: at hearing. Cf. 'to be,' I, i, 254.

29–31. **Should they . . . with death.** If they did not smart and remind him that they needed probing, they might well fester (because of the ingratitude shown them) and produce death.

31. **tent**: probe. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 626: "I 'll tent him to the quick."

We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth,
Before the common distribution, at
Your only choice.

MARTIUS. I thank you, general;
But cannot make my heart consent to take
A bribe to pay my sword: I do refuse it,
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing.

[*A long flourish. They all cry* 'Martius! Martius!' *cast up their caps and lances:* COMINIUS *and* LARTIUS *stand bare*]

MARTIUS. May these same instruments, which you profane,
Never sound more! when drums and trumpets shall
I' th' field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
Made all of false-fac'd soothing!

44. all of F_1F_2 | of all F_3F_4.

36–40. "But Martius, stepping forth, told the Consul he most thankfully accepted the gift of his horse, and was a glad man besides, that his service had deserved his General's commendation: and as for his other offer, which was rather a mercenary reward than a honourable recompense, he would have none of it, but was contented to have his equal part with the other soldiers." — Plutarch.

42–46. These lines have led to various alterations of the text. The chief difficulty is 'overture,' for which most editors substitute 'coverture.' But 'overture' here has probably its original sense of 'formal opening.' Martius has been fighting in his country's cause (line 17), and deprecates bribery (line 38) and flattery, which only unfit the soldier for duty. When drums and trumpets on the field of battle shall prove flatterers, well may courts and cities be naught else. When steel loses its power (because the soldier's arm has become effeminate), then let the parasite (who accepts gifts and wins his way by flattery) take the place of the warrior in beginning wars.

44. **false-fac'd soothing**: hypocritical flattery. Cf. II, ii, 77. Cf. 'soothest,' *King John*, III, i, 121.

When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk,
Let him be made an overture for th' wars!
No more, I say! For that I have not wash'd
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch,
Which without note here 's many else have done,
You shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical,
As if I lov'd my little should be dieted
In praises sauc'd with lies.

COMINIUS. Too modest are you;
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly: by your patience,
If 'gainst yourself you be incens'd, we 'll put you
(Like one that means his proper harm) in manacles,
Then reason safely with you. Therefore be it known,
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Martius
Wears this war's garland: in token of the which,
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,

46. an overture | an Overture Ff | a coverture Steevens (Tyrwhitt) Camb Globe. **50-51.** One line in Ff. — **shout** F_4 | shoot $F_1F_2F_3$. **56. 'gainst** F_1 | against $F_2F_3F_4$.

45. parasite's silk. Silk was identified with effeminacy. Cf. Dekker and Chettle's *Grissil:* "Those changeable silk gallants, who read . . . no books but a looking-glass." Under 'silk' Murray quotes Purchas, *Verses in Capt. Smith's Virginia:* "Fetters are forged For Silke-sotts, Milk-sops."

48. debile: weak, feeble. Cf. *All 's Well that Ends Well*, II, iii, 39.

49. here 's many. For the form of the verb see Abbott, § 335.

55. give: represent. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, iv, 39–40: "and men's reports Give him much wrong'd."

57. proper: own. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, V, i, 328: "Here at my house, and at my proper cost."

58. reason: talk, converse. So in IV, vi, 51.

With all his trim belonging; and from this time,
For what he did before Corioles, call him,
With all th' applause and clamour of the host,
CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS. Bear
Th' addition nobly ever!

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums*]

ALL. Caius Martius Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS. I will go wash:
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush, or no: howbeit, I thank you:
I mean to stride your steed, and at all times
To undercrest your good addition
To the fairness of my power.

COMINIUS. So, to our tent,
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,
Must to Corioles back: send us to Rome
The best, with whom we may articulate,
For their own good and ours.

LARTIUS. I shall, my lord.

CORIOLANUS. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.

65-66. One line in Ff.
65, 67. **Caius Martius Coriolanus** Rowe | Marcus Caius Coriolanus F_1F_2 | Martius Caius Coriolanus F_3F_4.
67. ALL | Omnes Ff.
68, 79, etc. CORIOLANUS | Mar. Ff.

66. addition: title. The technical sense, 'something added to a coat of arms as a mark of honour,' is suggested here. So in line 72.

72–73. To justify, as far as lies in my power, the honourable title bestowed on me. — **undercrest.** The metaphor is from heraldry.

77. The best: the chief men of Corioles. — **articulate**: draw up articles of agreement, arrange terms of capitulation.

COMINIUS. Take 't; 't is yours: what is 't?
CORIOLANUS. I sometime lay here in Corioles
At a poor man's house; he us'd me kindly:
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity: I request you
To give my poor host freedom.
COMINIUS. O, well begg'd!
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind: deliver him, Titus.
LARTIUS. Martius, his name?
CORIOLANUS. By Jupiter, forgot:
I am weary; yea, my memory is tir'd:
Have we no wine here?
COMINIUS. Go we to our tent:
The blood upon your visage dries; 't is time
It should be look'd to: come. [*Exeunt*]

82–87. "Among the Volsces there is an old friend and host of mine, an honest wealthy man, and now a prisoner; who, living before in great wealth in his own country, liveth now a poor prisoner, in the hands of his enemies: and yet notwithstanding all this his misery and misfortune, it would do me great pleasure if I could save him from this one danger, to keep him from being sold as a slave." — Plutarch.

89. **free as is the wind.** Cf. *As You Like It*, II, vii, 47–49:

> I must have liberty
> Withal, as large a charter as the wind
> To blow on whom I please;

and *The Tempest*, I, ii, 498–499:

> Thou shalt be free
> As mountain winds.

91. "Then they prayed Martius that he would retire to the camp, because they saw he was able to do no more, he was already so wearied with the great pain he had taken, and so faint with the great wounds he had upon him." — Plutarch.

SCENE X. *The camp of the* Volsces

A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS *bloody, with two or three* Soldiers

AUFIDIUS. The town is ta'en!

1 SOLDIER. 'T will be deliver'd back on good condition.

AUFIDIUS. Condition?
I would I were a Roman, for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition?
What good condition can a treaty find
I' th' part that is at mercy? Five times, Martius,
I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me;
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat. By th' elements,
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,
He 's mine, or I am his: mine emulation
Hath not that honour in 't it had; for where
I thought to crush him in án equal force,
True sword to sword, I 'll potch at him some way,
Or wrath, or craft may get him.

1 SOLDIER. He 's the devil.

SCENE X Capell. — *The . . .* Volsces | Ff omit. 2, 16, etc. 1 SOLDIER | Sould. (Soul. Sol.) Ff. 3, 5. **Condition?** Ff | condition! Camb. 10. **As** F_1F_4 | And F_2F_3.

2. **good condition**: favorable terms. In lines 3 and 5 Aufidius repeats the word in the sense intended by the soldier; then in line 6, with grim irony, he plays on its second meaning, 'quality,' 'character.'

5. **be that I am**: be myself, be natural. His defeat calls forth the baser side of his nature (cf. lines 12–16).

7. **I' th' part**: on the side. Cf. I, i, 229; III, i, 143; V, iii, 121.

15. **potch at**: make a thrust at (as in fencing). The verb is usually transitive and spelled 'poach.'

AUFIDIUS. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's poison'd
With only suffering stain by him; for him
Shall fly out of itself: nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick; nor fane nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Martius. Where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in 's heart. Go you to th' city;
Learn how 't is held, and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

20. **fane** | Phane Ff.

17–27. In *Lectures and Notes on Shakspere* Coleridge has the following comment on this speech: "I have such deep faith in Shakspere's heart-lore, that I take for granted that this is in nature, and not as a mere anomaly; though I cannot in myself discover any germ of possible feeling, which could wax and unfold itself into such sentiment as this. However, I perceive that in this speech is meant to be contained a prevention of shock at the after-change in Aufidius' character."

18. **With only . . . by him**: merely by being outdone by him. — **for him**: because of him.

20. **Being naked, sick**: if he (Coriolanus) were naked or sick. The speaker's emotion breaks down the formal rules of grammar.

22. **Embarquements**: restraints, impediments. A variant of the obsolete word 'embargement,' which means literally 'a placing under embargo.' Coleridge favored Hanmer's reading, 'embankments.'

25. In my own house, under my brother's protection.

26. **hospitable canon**: laws of hospitality. By Greek and Roman custom the person of a guest was sacred. Even a stranger could claim protection at the hearth.

28. **how 't is held**: how strongly it is garrisoned.

1 SOLDIER. Will not you go?

AUFIDIUS. I am attended at the cypress grove. I pray you
('T is south the city mills) bring me word thither 31
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

1 SOLDIER. I shall, sir. [*Exeunt*]

30. **cypress** Rowe | Cyprus Ff. 33. [*Exeunt*] Ff omit.
31. **mills** | Mils F_1F_2 | Mill F_3F_4.

30. **attended**: waited for. Cf. I, i, 72, 240.

31. **south the city mills.** In 1588 the Corporation of London built four corn mills on the south side of the Thames, not far from where the Globe Theatre was erected in 1599, and it has been suggested that Shakespeare had these in mind. Verity compares *Julius Cæsar*, I, iii, 75, "As doth the lion in the Capitol," as if Shakespeare were thinking of the lions kept in the Tower of London. Malone says, "Shakespeare frequently introduces those minute local descriptions, probably to give an air of truth to his pieces," and then quotes *Romeo and Juliet*, I, i, 127–130:

> A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad,
> Where underneath the grove of sycamore,
> That westward rooteth from the city's side,
> So early walking did I see your son.

ACT II

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place*

Enter MENENIUS *with the two* Tribunes *of the people*, SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS

MENENIUS. The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

BRUTUS. Good or bad?

MENENIUS. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Martius.

SICINIUS. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

MENENIUS. Pray you, who does the wolf love?

SICINIUS. The lamb.

MENENIUS. Ay, to devour him, as the hungry plebeians would the noble Martius.

BRUTUS. He 's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

MENENIUS. He 's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men: tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

BOTH. Well, sir.

MENENIUS. In what enormity is Martius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

BRUTUS. He 's poor in no one fault, but stor'd with all.

SICINIUS. Especially in pride.

ACT II. SCENE I Rowe | Actus Secundus Ff. — *Rome . . . place* Ff omit.

1. **augurer** | augur Pope.
18. **with all** F_3F_4 | withall F_1F_2.
19. **in pride** $F_1F_2F_3$ | Pride F_4.

BRUTUS. And topping all others in boasting.

MENENIUS. This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' th' right-hand file? do you?

BOTH. Why, how are we censur'd?

MENENIUS. Because you talk of pride now, will you not be angry?

BOTH. Well, well, sir, well.

MENENIUS. Why, 't is no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Martius for being proud.

BRUTUS. We do it not alone, sir.

MENENIUS. I know you can do very little alone, for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O that you could!

BOTH. What then, sir?

20. **boasting** F_1 | boast $F_2F_3F_4$.
24. BOTH F_1F_2 | Bru. F_3F_4.
25. **now, will** Ff | now,—will Capell.
32. **proud.** Ff | proud? Capell.
40. BOTH $F_1F_2F_3$ | Men. F_4 | Bru. Rowe Globe.

22. **censured**: estimated, regarded. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. *King John*, II, i, 328. Cf. 'giddy censure,' I, i, 263.

22–23. **th' right-hand file**: the patricians. Cf. 'The common file,' I, vi, 43.

36. **single**: simple, weak. With a play on 'alone.' Cf. *2 Henry IV*, I, ii, 206–207: "your chin double? your wit single?"

37–39. "With allusion to the fable, which says that every man has a bag hanging before him in which he puts his neighbours' faults, and another behind him in which he stows his own." — Johnson.

MENENIUS. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome.

SICINIUS. Menenius, you are known well enough too. 44

MENENIUS. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in 't: said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint, hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning. What I think, I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are (I cannot call you Lycurguses), if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I can say your worships have deliver'd the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you have good faces. If you see this in the map of

48. **upon too** Rowe | vppon, to F_1 | upon, to $F_2F_3F_4$.
52. **call you** F_1F_2 | call your F_3F_4.
54. **can** Ff | can't Theobald.
58. **tell you** Ff | tell you, you Pope | tell you you Camb Globe.

42–43. **unmeriting . . . as**: as unmeriting . . . as. In constructions with 'so . . . as,' 'as . . . as,' and the like, the first word or the second is sometimes omitted. See Abbott, § 281.

45. **humorous**: capricious (following his humours or whims).

46–47. **allaying Tiber**. Lovelace imitates this in *To Althea from Prison*:

> When flowing cups run swiftly round
> With no allaying Thames.

51. **wealsmen**: statesmen. Used here ironically.

54. **can**. Theobald's change to 'can't' destroys the irony.

55. **the ass in compound with**: an ingredient of the fool, with perhaps a punning reference to some Latin grammar rule.

58–59. **the map of my microcosm**: my face.

my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? what harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too? 61

BRUTUS. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough.

MENENIUS. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a forset-seller, and then rejourn the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinch'd with the colic, you make faces like mummers, set up the bloody flag against all patience, and dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones. 73

BRUTUS. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

MENENIUS. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are,

60. **bisson** Theobald | beesome F_1F_2 | beesom F_3 | besom F_4.

60. **bisson conspectuities**. A humorous substitute for 'blind eyes.' In *Hamlet*, II, ii, 529, 'bisson' means 'blinding.' The word 'conspectuities' is coined by Menenius humorously. Cf. his 'empiricutic,' line 109, and 'fidius'd,' line 123.

64. **caps and legs**: doffing of hats and obeisance. Cf. 'cap,' line 97; 'cap and knee,' *1 Henry IV*, IV, iii, 68.

66. **forset-seller**: faucet-seller, seller of wine-taps. Rowe spelled it 'fosset-seller.'

70. **set up the bloody flag**: declare war. Cf. *Henry V*, I, ii, 101.

78–79. **you are . . . It is**. The punctuation is that of the first three Folios. In the Fourth Folio the arrangement is, "you are; when you speak best unto the purpose, It is," etc.

when you speak best unto the purpose. It is not worth the wagging of your beards, and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entomb'd in an ass's pack-saddle: yet you must be saying 'Martius is proud'; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion, though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den to your worships: more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you.

[BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *go aside*] 88

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* VALERIA

How now, my as fair as noble ladies (and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler) whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

VOLUMNIA. Honourable Menenius, my boy Martius approaches: for the love of Juno, let 's go.

MENENIUS. Ha? Martius coming home?

VOLUMNIA. Ay, worthy Menenius, and with most prosperous approbation. 96

88. [BRUTUS . . .] Bru. and Scic. $F_2F_3F_4$. Aside F_1 | Brutus and Sicinius. Aside 89. Scene II Pope.

80–81. **beards . . . stuff a botcher's cushion.** Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, III, ii, 46–47: "and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis balls." — **botcher**: old-clothes mender.

84. **Deucalion.** The Greek Noah. Cf. "far than Deucalion off," *The Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 442. The story of Deucalion would be known to Shakespeare probably through Golding's *Ovid*.

85. **God-den**: good even ('God give you good even').

94. **Ha?** The interrogation indicates the inflection of the exclamation. Most editors change the punctuation to an exclamation point.

MENENIUS. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee: hoo! Martius coming home?

VIRGILIA. } Nay, 't is true.
VALERIA. }

VOLUMNIA. Look, here 's a letter from him: the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there 's one at home for you.

MENENIUS. I will make my very house reel to-night. A letter for me?

VIRGILIA. Yes, certain; there 's a letter for you; I saw 't.

MENENIUS. A letter for me! it gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricutic, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

VIRGILIA. O, no, no, no.

VOLUMNIA. O, he is wounded; I thank the gods for 't.

MENENIUS. So do I too, if it be not too much: brings a victory in his pocket? the wounds become him.

VOLUMNIA. On 's brows: Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

MENENIUS. Has he disciplin'd Aufidius soundly?

99. VIRGILIA. VALERIA | 2. Ladies Ff.
109. **empiricutic** Camb | Emperickqutique F_1F_2 | Empericktique F_3F_4.
111. **wounded.** | wounded? Ff.
114. **a** Ff | a' Theobald | he a Pope.

97. **Take my cap, Jupiter.** Cf. 'caps and legs,' line 64.
108. **Galen.** A celebrated Greek physician. He was not born until 131 A.D. Another anachronism. Cf. the reference to Cato, I, iv, 57.
109. **empiricutic**: quackish. Coined from 'empiric.'
114. **a**: he. A dialectic form. Often printed 'a or a'.
117. **the oaken garland.** See note, I, iii, 12.

VOLUMNIA. Titus Lartius writes, they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

MENENIUS. And 't was time for him too, I 'll warrant him that: and he had stay'd by him, I would not have been so fidius'd for all the chests in Corioles, and the gold that 's in them. Is the senate possess'd of this?

VOLUMNIA. Good ladies, let 's go. Yes, yes, yes: the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

VALERIA. In troth, there 's wondrous things spoke of him.

MENENIUS. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

VIRGILIA. The gods grant them true!

VOLUMNIA. True? pow waw.

MENENIUS. True? I 'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded? [*To the* Tribunes] God save your good worships! Martius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud. Where is he wounded?

122. and Ff | an' Capell | if Pope.
123. fidius'd | fiddious'd Ff.
134. pow waw Ff | pow, wow Capell Camb Globe.
136. [*To the* Tribunes] Theobald | Ff omit.

123. **fidius'd**. Coined from 'Aufidius.' Cf. *Henry V*, IV, iv, 29: "Master Fer! I 'll fer him"; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV, ii, 191, 193: "Mother Prat, . . . I 'll prat her."

124. **possess'd**: fully informed (put in possession of the facts).

126. **letters**: a letter. After the Latin plural, *litterae*. Frequently so, and common to-day in legal phraseology. Cf. *All 's Well that Ends Well*, IV, iii, 91–92.

129. **there 's**. For the form of the verb see Abbott, § 335.

132. **true purchasing**: honest winning. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, ix, 43: "purchas'd by the merit of the wearer."

VOLUMNIA. I' th' shoulder and i' th' left arm: there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' th' body.

MENENIUS. One i' th' neck, and two i' th' thigh; there 's nine that I know.

VOLUMNIA. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

MENENIUS. Now it 's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish.*] Hark, the trumpets!

VOLUMNIA. These are the ushers of Martius: before him he carries noise, and behind him, he leaves tears:
Death, that dark spirit, in 's nervy arm doth lie,
Which being advanc'd, declines, and then men die.

A sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS *the general, and* TITUS LARTIUS: *between them* CORIOLANUS, *crown'd with an oaken garland, with* Captains *and* Soldiers, *and a* Herald

HERALD. Know, Rome, that all alone Martius did fight
Within Corioles gates: where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Martius: these

148. [*A shout and flourish.*] Ff after 'trumpets.'
149–150. Irregular verse in Ff.
153. Scene III Pope.
155. **Caius Martius** | Martius Caius Ff. — **these** | Ff print in next line.

141. **his place.** The reference is to the consulship.
151–152. This ranting couplet is probably an actor's interpolation. — **nervy**: sinewy, strong. See note, I, i, 133.
153. **sennet.** A word often found in old stage directions. Its origin is uncertain (but cf. 'signature' in musical notation). It indicates a set of notes on a trumpet or cornet to signal the march of a procession.
154. **Corioles gates.** Cf. 'Corioles walls,' I, viii, 8.

In honour follows Coriolanus.
Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus! [*Flourish*]

ALL. Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS. No more of this, it does offend my heart:
Pray now, no more.

COMINIUS. Look, sir, your mother!

CORIOLANUS. O,
You have, I know, petition'd all the gods
For my prosperity. [*Kneels*]

VOLUMNIA. Nay, my good soldier, up:
My gentle Martius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly nam'd,
(What is it?) Coriolanus must I call thee?
But, O, thy wife!

CORIOLANUS. My gracious silence, hail!
Wouldst thou have laugh'd, had I come coffin'd home,
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah, my dear,

156. **Coriolanus** | Martius Caius Coriolanus Ff.
157. [*Flourish*] Sound. Flourish Ff.
159-162. **No more . . . my prosperity** | prose in Ff.
163. **and** | Ff print in next line.

164. **deed-achieving honour**: honour from deeds achieved. In Shakespeare active participles are often used in a passive sense. With 'deed-achieving' compare 'all-obeying' ('obeyed by all'), *Antony and Cleopatra*, III, xiii, 77.

166. **My gracious silence.** "This name for his wife, who, while the others are receiving him with loud rejoicings, meets and welcomes him with speechless happiness looking out from her swimming eyes, is conceived in the very fulness of poetical and Shakespearian perfection. It comprises the gracefulness of beauty which distinguishes her, and the gracious effect which her muteness of love-joy has upon him who shrinks from noisy applause and even from merely expressed approbation; and it wonderfully concentrates into one felicitous word the silent softness that characterizes Virgilia." — Cowden Clarke.

Such eyes the widows in Corioles wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

MENENIUS. Now the gods crown thee!

CORIOLANUS. And live you yet? [*To* VALERIA] O my sweet lady, pardon.

VOLUMNIA. I know not where to turn. O, welcome home:
And welcome, general! and ye 're welcome all.

MENENIUS. A hundred thousand welcomes. I could weep,
And I could laugh; I am light, and heavy. Welcome!
A curse begin at very root on 's heart,
That is not glad to see thee! You are three
That Rome should dote on: yet, by the faith of men,
We have some old crab-trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors!
We call a nettle but a nettle, and
The faults of fools but folly.

COMINIUS. Ever right.

CORIOLANUS. Menenius, ever, ever.

HERALD. Give way there, and go on.

CORIOLANUS. [*To* VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA] Your hand, and yours:

169. **wear** F_3F_4|weare F_2|were F_1.
171. CORIOLANUS| Com. Ff.— [*To* VALERIA] Theobald | Ff omit.
172-182. Fifteen lines in Ff.
173. **ye 're** | y' are Ff.
177. **You** $F_2F_3F_4$ | Yon F_1.
180. **relish** F_4 | Rallish F_1 | Rellish F_2F_3.
185. [*To* . . . VIRGILIA] Camb | Ff omit. — **yours :** | yours? Ff.

176–177. **on 's heart, That is not glad**: on his heart, that is not glad (on the heart of him, that is not glad). 'His,' retaining its force as the genitive of 'he,' is the antecedent of the relative 'That.' Cf. *All 's Well that Ends Well*, III, iv, 27: "her prayers, whom heaven delights to hear." See Abbott, § 218.

179. **crab-trees**. The tribunes are meant.

180. **grafted to your relish**. The fruit will not be to your taste.

Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited,
From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings,
But with them, change of honours.

VOLUMNIA. I have lived
To see inherited my very wishes,
And the buildings of my fancy: only
There 's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

CORIOLANUS. Know, good mother,
I had rather be their servant in my way
Than sway with them in theirs.

COMINIUS. On, to the Capitol!

[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before.* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *come forward*]

BRUTUS. All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacled to see him: your prattling nurse
Into a rapture lets her baby cry,
While she chats him: the kitchen malkin pins

189. **change** Ff | charge Theobald. 191-193. **And the . . . upon thee** | four lines in Ff. 195. **Than** F3F4 | Then F1 | Ten F2. — [. . . BRUTUS . . . *forward*] Theobald | Enter Brutus and Sicinius (Scicinius F1) Ff. 196. Scene IV Pope.

189. **change of honours**: different honours, fresh honours.

190. To see myself in possession of all I have wished for. Cf. *The Tempest*, II, ii, 179–181: "the king and all our company else being drown'd, we will inherit here."

198. **rapture**: paroxysm, fit. The etymological meaning is 'seizure.' In the earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare 'rupture' was introduced as an emendation.

199. **chats him**: chats about him. Cf. 'speak him,' II, ii, 100; *Cymbeline*, I, i, 24. See Abbott, § 200. — **malkin**: slattern. Sometimes written and pronounced 'mawkin.' A diminutive of 'Matilda.'

Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clamb'ring the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges hors'd
With variable complexions, all agreeing
In earnestness to see him: seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station: our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask in
Their nicely gawded cheeks to th' wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses: such a pother,
As if that whatsoever god who leads him

201-202. Three lines in Ff. 209. **pother** Rowe | poother Ff.

200. **lockram**: a kind of coarse linen. So called from Locronan ('cell of St. Ronan'), a village in Brittany, where the fabric was formerly made. For the form cf. 'buckram.' — **reechy**: grimy, dirty. A form of 'reeky.'

201. **bulks**: framework projecting from the front of a shop.

202–203. **leads fill'd . . . variable complexions**: men are crowded on the lead-covered roofs, and the ridgepoles are bestridden by all sorts of people. 'Variable' is in marked antithesis to 'all agreeing.'

204. **seld-shown**: seldom showing themselves to public view. — **flamens**: a high order of priests appearing only on ceremonial occasions.

206. **vulgar station**: standing-place among the rabble.

207–208. **the war . . . cheeks**. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV, v, 30: "Such war of white and red within her cheeks"; *Lucrece*, 71–72:

> Their silent war of lilies and of roses,
> Which Tarquin view'd in her fair face's field.

208. **nicely gawded**: daintily adorned. Many modern editors write 'nicely-gawded.'

209. **Phœbus'**. The reference is to Phœbus Apollo, the sun god.

210. **that whatsoever god**: that god, whatsoever god he be. The 'that' adds force to the sneer of the speaker. Some editors take 'that' with 'if,' as in IV, ii, 13. Cf. *Sonnets*, XXVI, 9: "Till whatsoever star that guides my moving."

Were slily crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.
SICINIUS. On the sudden,
I warrant him consul.
BRUTUS. Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.
SICINIUS. He cannot temp'rately transport his honours,
From where he should begin and end, but will
Lose those he hath won.
BRUTUS. In that there 's comfort.
SICINIUS. Doubt not
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they
Upon their ancient malice will forget,
With the least cause, these his new honours, which
That he will give them make I as little question
As he is proud to do 't.
BRUTUS. I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for consul, never would he
Appear i' th' market-place, nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility,

211, 240. **human** Rowe | humane Ff. 225. **napless** Rowe | Naples Ff.

219. **Upon**: on the ground of, in consequence of. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, IV, i, 225: "she died upon his words." See Abbott, §191.

220–222. **which That . . . to do 't**: that he will give them cause, I have as little doubt as that he is proud of doing it.

225–227. "For the custom of Rome was at that time, that such as did sue for any office, should for certain days before be in the market-place, only with a poor gown on their backs, and without any coat underneath, to pray the citizens to remember them at the day of election: which was thus devised, either to move the people the more, by requesting them in such mean apparel, or else because they might show them their wounds they had gotten in the wars in

Nor showing, as the manner is, his wounds
To th' people, beg their stinking breaths.

SICINIUS. 'T is right.

BRUTUS. It was his word: O, he would miss it, rather
Than carry it but by the suit of the gentry to him,
And the desire of the nobles.

SICINIUS. I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose, and to put it
In execution.

BRUTUS. 'T is most like he will.

SICINIUS. It shall be to him then, as our good wills,
A sure destruction.

BRUTUS. So it must fall out
To him, or our authorities. For an end,
We must suggest the people in what hatred
He still hath held them: that to 's power he would
Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders, and

228-230. **It was . . . the nobles** | four lines in Ff. 229. **of the** Ff | o' th' Pope. — **to him** | Pope omits. 230-232. **I wish . . . In execution** | prose in Ff.

the service of the commonwealth, as manifest marks and testimonies of their valiantness." — Plutarch. North, who translated Plutarch from the French of Amyot (see Introduction), mistook the expression *un robe simple* ('a single gown') and translated it 'a poor gown.' Shakespeare turned this into 'napless vesture of humility.'

233. **as our good wills.** Either (1) 'as our dispositions towards him are,' or (2) 'as our advantage requires.'

235. **For an end**: to bring matters to a crisis. Some editors interpret the phrase to mean 'in short,' 'to cut the matter short.'

236. **suggest**: suggest to, craftily remind. In Shakespeare 'suggest' and 'suggestion' often imply underhand methods. For the omission of 'to' see Abbott, § 200.

237. **still**: always, continually. So in II, ii, 130, and often. — **to 's power**: to the utmost of his power.

Dispropertied their freedoms; holding them,
In human action and capacity,
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world
Than camels in their war, who have their provand
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
For sinking under them.

SICINIUS. This, as you say, suggested
At some time, when his soaring insolence
Shall touch the people (which time shall not want,
If he be put upon 't, and that 's as easy
As to set dogs on sheep) will be his fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger

BRUTUS. What 's the matter?

MESSENGER. You are sent for to the Capitol: 't is thought
That Martius shall be consul:
I have seen the dumb men throng to see him, and
The blind to hear him speak: matrons flung gloves,

239. **Dispropertied** F_1 | disproportioned $F_2F_3F_4$.
242. **their war** Ff | the war Hanmer.
246. **touch** Hanmer | teach Ff.
248. **his** Ff | the Pope | as Capell.
251–254. **You are . . . flung gloves** | in Ff lines end 'Capitol,' 'consul,' 'see him,' 'gloves.'

239. **Dispropertied**: dispossessed them of, robbed them of.

242. **their**. Hanmer substituted 'the', but 'their' brings out the attitude of the exclusive aristocrat. — **provand**: provender.

247. **put upon 't**: instigated to it. Cf. 'putting on,' II, iii, 247.

254–256. An example of what has been called 'Elizabethan colouring.' The Romans are represented as doing what, in the days of chivalry, was done at tiltings and tournaments in honour of the victor. 'Handkercher,' still common in dialect, probably represents the Elizabethan pronunciation.

Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,
Upon him as he pass'd: the nobles bended
As to Jove's statue, and the commons made
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts:
I never saw the like.

BRUTUS. Let 's to the Capitol,
And carry with us ears and eyes for th' time,
But hearts for the event.

SICINIUS. Have with you. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *The same. The Capitol*

Enter two Officers, *to lay cushions*

1 OFFICER. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

2 OFFICER. Three, they say: but 't is thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

1 OFFICER. That 's a brave fellow; but he 's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

2 OFFICER. Faith, there hath been many great men that have flatter'd the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground: therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care

SCENE II Capell | Scene V Pope. — *The . . . Capitol* | Ff omit. 1. . . . *lay cushions* | . . . lay Cushions, as it were, in the Capitoll (Capitall F_2) (Capitol F_3F_4) Ff. 7. **hath** $F_1F_2F_3$ | have F_4.

261. Have with you: I 'll go with you. A common idiom.

5. vengeance: excessively, 'with a vengeance.' Cf. III, i, 262.

7. hath . . . many great men. For the singular form with the plural subject see Abbott, §§ 334, 335.

whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition, and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see 't. 14

1 OFFICER. If he did not care whether he had their love, or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good, nor harm; but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him, and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people, is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love. 21

2 OFFICER. He hath deserved worthily of his country, and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to have them at all into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to

23. **ascent** $F_2F_3F_4$ | assent F_1.

16. **waved**: would waver. Cf. 'charg'd,' IV, vi, 112. For this simple form of the subjunctive see Abbott, § 361.

19. **discover him their opposite**: reveal him as their antagonist.

19–21. "He is less to be blamed that seeketh to please and gratify his common people than he that despiseth and disdaineth them, and therefore offereth them wrong and injury, because he would not seem to flatter them, to win the more authority." — Plutarch, *Comparison of Alcibiades with Coriolanus*.

23–26. **those who . . . and report**: those who, supple and courteous to the people, doffed their bonnets to them, without doing anything further to win their good opinion and good words. With 'supple and courteous . . . bonneted' cf. 'caps and legs,' II, i, 64; III, ii, 73–86. Knight and Staunton take 'bonneted' in the sense of 'put on their bonnets': "After being supple and courteous (and so having won their ends) they put on their bonnets, and took no more trouble."

25. **have**. Pope changed this to 'heave.'

be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury: to report otherwise were a malice that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

1 OFFICER. No more of him; he 's a worthy man: make way, they are coming.

A sennet. Enter, with Lictors *before them*, COMINIUS *the consul*, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, Senators, SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS: *the* Senators *take their places: the* Tribunes *take their places by themselves:* CORIOLANUS *stands*

MENENIUS. Having determin'd of the Volsces and
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that
Hath thus stood for his country: therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul, and last general
In our well-found successes, to report
A little of that worthy work perform'd
By Caius Martius Coriolanus; whom
We met here, both to thank and to remember
With honours like himself.

1 SENATOR. Speak, good Cominius:

34. Scene VI Pope.
34. ...*Enter*... Tribunes... | Enter the Patricians, and the Tribunes of the People, Lictors before them: Coriolanus, Menenius, Cominius the Consul: Sicinius (Scicinius F1) and Brutus take their places by themselves: Coriolanus stands Ff.
43. **Caius Martius** Rowe | Martius Caius Ff.

34. **determin'd of**: come to a decision concerning.
37. **gratify**: requite. — **his**. See note, II, i, 176–177.
41. **well-found**: fortunately met with. In *All's Well that Ends Well*, II, i, 105, the word means 'skilled,' 'expert.'

Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state 's defective for requital
Than we to stretch it out. [*To the* Tribunes] Masters o' th'
people,
We do request your kindest ears; and after,
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.
SICINIUS. We are convented
Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts
Inclinable to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly.
BRUTUS. Which the rather
We shall be blest to do, if he remember
A kinder value of the people than
He hath hereto priz'd them at.
MENENIUS. That 's off, that 's off:
I would you rather had been silent: please you
To hear Cominius speak?
BRUTUS. Most willingly;
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.
MENENIUS. He loves your people,
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.

47. **state 's** F_4 | states $F_1F_2F_3$. 48. [*To the* Tribunes] Camb Globe | Ff omit. 49. **ears** | eares F_1 | eare F_2 | ear F_3F_4. 51-63. **We . . . place** | prose in Ff.

46–48. **make us . . . it out**: make us think that the state lacks means for requital, rather than that we lack inclination to extend it.

49–51. **after . . . here**: afterwards your kind interposition with the common people, that they may grant whatever is decided upon.

51–52. **convented Upon**: summoned to ratify. Cf. II, iii, 139–140.

57. **off**: off the subject, "nothing to the purpose." — Johnson.

Worthy Cominius, speak. [CORIOLANUS *rises, and offers to go away.*] Nay, keep your place.

1 SENATOR. Sit, Coriolanus: never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.

CORIOLANUS. Your honours' pardon:
I had rather have my wounds to heal again,
Than hear say how I got them.

BRUTUS. Sir, I hope
My words disbench'd you not.

CORIOLANUS. No, sir; yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You sooth'd not, therefore hurt not: but your people,
I love them as they weigh.

MENENIUS. Pray now, sit down.

CORIOLANUS. I had rather have one scratch my head i' th' sun
When the alarum were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [*Exit*]

MENENIUS. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter

64. 1 SENATOR | Senat. Ff. — **Sit** F1 | Sir F2F3F4.
67-68. **Sir . . . not** | one line in Ff.
68. **you not.** | you not? Ff.
71. **weigh.** | weigh — Ff.
74. [*Exit*] Exit Coriolanus Ff.

63. CORIOLANUS *rises* . . . This, the stage direction of the Folios, indicates that Coriolanus has taken his seat, perhaps after the first speech of Menenius.

68. **disbench'd**: caused you to leave your seat. Cf. 'bencher,' II, i, 75.

70. **sooth'd**: flattered, cajoled. Cf. 'soothing,' I, ix, 44.

71. **weigh**: are worthy. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, V, i, 92–93:

> I know them, yea,
> And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple.

74. **monster'd**: made extraordinary. Cf. *King Lear*, I, i, 223. — **Masters . . . people.** An ironical repetition. Cf. line 48.

(That 's thousand to one good one) when you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour
Than one on 's ears to hear it? Proceed, Cominius.

COMINIUS. I shall lack voice: the deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held
That valour is the chiefest virtue and
Most dignifies the haver: if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpois'd. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others: our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,
When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him: he bestrid
An o'er-press'd Roman, and i' th' consul's view
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on his knee: in that day's feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,

78. **one on 's** F_3 | on ones F_1F_2 | one o's F_4 | one of 's Rowe.
88. **chin** F_3F_4 | Shinne F_1F_2.
89. **bristled** Rowe | brizled Ff.

76. **That 's . . . good one**: with only one good one in a thousand.
78. **one on 's**: one of his. Cf. I, iii, 63.
84. **singly**: by any single man.
85. **made a head for**: raised an army against.
88. **with his Amazonian chin**: beardless as an Amazon.
89–90. **he bestrid . . . consul's view**. "The first time he went to the wars, being but a stripling, was when Tarquin, surnamed the proud . . . did come to Rome with all the aid of the Latins . . . Martius valiantly fought in the sight of the Dictator: and a Roman soldier being thrown to the ground even hard by him, Martius straight bestrid him, and slew the enemy." — Plutarch.
92. **on his knee**: so that he fell on his knee.
93. In Shakespeare's time women's parts were acted by youths.

He prov'd best man i' th' field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-ent'red thus, he waxed like a sea,
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioles, let me say,
I cannot speak him home: he stopp'd the fliers,
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,
Where it did mark, it took from face to foot:
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was tim'd with dying cries: alone he ent'red
The mortal gate of th' city, which he painted
With shunless destiny: aidless came off,

98. of the F_1|o' th F_2|o' th' F_3F_4. 102. weeds F_1 | Waves $F_2F_3F_4$.

96. **Man-ent'red thus**: thus entered into manhood.

98. **lurch'd**: cheated, robbed. Cf. Ben Jonson, *The Silent Woman* (1609), V, iv: "Well, Dauphine, you have lurch'd your friends of the better half of the garland."

100. **speak him home**: describe him thoroughly. For the force of 'home' cf. 'charge him home,' III, iii, 1.

105. **took**: made its way. "Take ... In early use chiefly with *to*; in later use with any prep. or adv. of direction; usually implying prompt action."—Murray. The punctuation in this line is that of the Folios. Most editors put a semicolon after 'took' and remove the colon from the end of the line, an arrangement that destroys the impressive figure. Cf. *Macbeth*, I, ii, 22: "Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th' chops."

108–109. **mortal**: deadly. Cf. III, i, 297. — **painted . . . destiny.** Plague-stricken houses were painted with a red cross, but there may be here a reminiscence of *Exodus*, xii, 22–23. — **shunless**: inevitable.

And with a sudden re-inforcement struck
Corioles like a planet. Now all 's his:
When, by and by, the din of war gan pierce
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit
Re-quick'ned what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he, where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'T were a perpetual spoil: and till we call'd
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

MENENIUS. Worthy man!

1 SENATOR. He cannot but with measure fit the honours
Which we devise him.

COMINIUS. Our spoils he kick'd at,
And look'd upon things precious as they were
The common muck of the world: he covets less
Than misery itself would give, rewards
His deeds with doing them, and is content
To spend the time to end it.

120-121. 1 SENATOR | 1 Sen. Rowe | Senat. Ff. — **He . . . him** Rowe's arrangement | Ff print as prose. 123. **of the** F_1 | o' th F_2 | o' th' F_3F_4.

110–111. struck . . . like a planet. An astrological allusion to the malign influence of adverse planets on human destiny. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, i, 162: "The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike."

112. gan. An aphetic (but not contracted) form of 'began.'

114. fatigate: fatigued. See Murray (Oxford Dictionary) under '-ate.'

120. with measure: adequately, proportionately. As Verity points out, we have here an example of dramatic irony, for 'the honours' referred to bring on the catastrophe.

124. misery. Perhaps 'avarice,' as suggested by 'covets.' "His mean and simple ordinary of diet . . . was imputed misery and niggardliness in him." — Plutarch, *Life of Galba*.

126. to end it: merely for the sake of thus spending it.

MENENIUS. He 's right noble:
Let him be call'd for.
1 SENATOR. Call Coriolanus.
OFFICER. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS

MENENIUS. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleas'd
To make thee consul.
CORIOLANUS. I do owe them still
My life and services.
MENENIUS. It then remains
That you do speak to the people.
CORIOLANUS. I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you
That I may pass this doing.
SICINIUS. Sir, the people
Must have their voices; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.
MENENIUS. Put them not to 't:

127. 1 SENATOR | 1. S. Capell | Call for Coriolanus Steevens. Senat. Ff. — **Call Coriolanus** Ff | 129. *Re-enter* . . . | Enter . . . Ff.

133–135. "Now Martius . . . shewed many wounds and cuts upon his body, which he had received in seventeen years' service at the wars, and in many sundry battles, being ever the foremost man that did set out feet to fight. So that there was not a man among the people but was ashamed of himself, to refuse so valiant a man: and one of them said to another, 'we must needs choose him Consul, there is no remedy.'" — Plutarch. Cf. II, iii, 82–84.

137. **have their voices**: exercise their votes. 'Voice' in this sense occurs in II, iii, 1, and elsewhere in the play.

Pray you, go fit you to the custom, and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.

CORIOLANUS. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

BRUTUS. Mark you that.

CORIOLANUS. To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus;
Show them th' unaching scars, which I should hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only.

MENENIUS. Do not stand upon 't.
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them, and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

SENATORS. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

[*Flourish of cornets. Exeunt all but* SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS]

BRUTUS. You see how he intends to use the people.

SICINIUS. May they perceive 's intent! he will require them,
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.

BRUTUS. Come, we 'll inform them
Of our proceedings here: on th' market-place
I know they do attend us. [*Exeunt*]

143. **that.** Ff | that? Rowe Camb.
151. SENATORS | Senat. Ff | Sic. Rowe.—[*Flourish*... BRUTUS] Flourish Cornets. Then Exeunt. Manet (Manent F4) Sicinius and Brutus Ff.
157. [*Exeunt*] Rowe | Ff omit.

141. **your form**: the formality which you must go through.

147. **stand upon 't**: insist upon objecting.

154–155. **contemn... give**: despise that it should be in their power to give that which he requested.

156. The Folios have no mark of punctuation after 'here.'

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum*

Enter seven or eight Citizens

1 CITIZEN. Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

2 CITIZEN. We may, sir, if we will.

3 CITIZEN. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do: for, if he show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds, and speak for them: so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

1 CITIZEN. And to make us no better thought of a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

3 CITIZEN. We have been call'd so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some abram, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely colour'd: and truly I

SCENE III Capell | Scene VII Pope. — *The same. The Forum* Capell | Ff omit.

17. **abram** $F_1F_2F_3$ | auburn F_4.

1. **Once**: once for all, in short. — **voices**: votes. Cf. II, ii, 137.

14. **once**: on the occasion that. See Abbott, § 244.

15. **many-headed multitude.** Cf. III, i, 93; IV, i, 1–2. The allusion is to the nine-headed Hydra slain by Hercules.

17. **abram.** Modern editors often substitute 'auburn,' but Murray quotes from Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman* (1661) to show that a distinction was drawn between them: "Abram-colour, i.e. brown. Auburne or Abborne, i.e. brown or brown-black."

think, if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' th' compass.

2 CITIZEN. Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly? 23

3 CITIZEN. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will; 't is strongly wedg'd up in a block-head; but if it were at liberty, 't would, sure, southward.

2 CITIZEN. Why that way?

3 CITIZEN. To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife. 30

2 CITIZEN. You are never without your tricks: you may, you may.

3 CITIZEN. Are you all resolv'd to give your voices? But that 's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

Enter CORIOLANUS *in a gown of humility, with* MENENIUS

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility: mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He 's to make his requests by particulars, wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our

21. **o' th'** F_4 | a' th F_1F_2.
25. **wedg'd** $F_2F_3F_4$ | wadg'd F_1.
28. **lose** F_3F_4 | loose F_1F_2.
34. **it.** I Rowe | it, I Ff.

26–29. **southward . . . fog . . . rotten dews.** See note, I, iv, 30.
31–32. **you may, you may**: chaff me as much as you like.
34. Theobald's punctuation. The Folios have 'it, I say. If . . .'
36. **gown of humility.** Cf. II, i, 225.
39. **by particulars**: to each plebeian individually.

own tongues: therefore follow me, and I 'll direct you how you shall go by him.

ALL. Content, content. [*Exeunt* Citizens]

MENENIUS. O sir, you are not right: have you not known
The worthiest men have done 't?

CORIOLANUS. What must I say?
'I pray, sir?' (Plague upon 't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace) 'Look, sir, my wounds!
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran
From th' noise of our own drums.'

MENENIUS. O me, the gods!
You must not speak of that: you must desire them
To think upon you.

CORIOLANUS. Think upon me? hang 'em!
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by 'em.

MENENIUS. You 'll mar all:
I 'll leave you: pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner. [*Exit*]

Re-enter three of the Citizens

CORIOLANUS. Bid them wash their faces,
And keep their teeth clean: so, here comes a brace:

43. [*Exeunt* . . .] Capell | Ff omit. 56. *Re-enter* . . . | *Enter* . . . Ff.

54. divines lose by 'em: preachers are ever wasting on them. A Roman referring to 'divines' is a characteristic anachronism.

56. wholesome: reasonable. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 328: "make me a wholesome answer." Coriolanus (lines 56–57) plays on the word.

57. brace. Two of the three citizens who have just entered. They are followed by the third citizen, who speaks in line 59. In line 38 the citizens are directed to approach "by ones, by twos, and by threes."

You know the cause, sir, of my standing here.

3 CITIZEN. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to 't.

CORIOLANUS. Mine own desert.

2 CITIZEN. Your own desert!

CORIOLANUS. Ay, not mine own desire.

3 CITIZEN. How? not your own desire?

CORIOLANUS. No, sir, 't was never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.

3 CITIZEN. You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope to gain by you.

CORIOLANUS. Well then, I pray, your price o' th' consulship.

1 CITIZEN. The price is, to ask it kindly.

CORIOLANUS. Kindly! Sir, I pray let me ha 't: I have wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private. Your good voice, sir: what say you?

2 CITIZEN. You shall ha 't, worthy sir.

CORIOLANUS. A match, sir. There 's in all two worthy voices begg'd. I have your alms: adieu.

3 CITIZEN. But this is something odd.

2 CITIZEN. And 't were to give again — but 't is no matter. [*Exeunt the three* Citizens]

59, 64, 67, 78. 3 CITIZEN | 3 Cit. Ff | 1 Cit. Rowe.
63. **Ay, not** | I, not F_3F_4 | I, but F_1 | I, no F_2 | Ay, but not Camb Globe.
69. **o' th'** F_4 | a' th' F_1F_3 | a' th F_2.
79. **And** Ff | An Pope.
80. [*Exeunt the three* Citizens] Exeunt Ff.

67–68. "Not seeing that Coriolanus spoke ironically, the citizen encourages him — with wasted kindness." — Verity.

73. **wounds . . . private.** Cf. lines 115–116. See note, II, ii, 133–135.

76–77. After the 'match' ('bargain') he walks away to meet other citizens.

Re-enter two other Citizens

CORIOLANUS. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

4 CITIZEN. You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

CORIOLANUS. Your enigma?

4 CITIZEN. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not indeed loved the common people.

CORIOLANUS. You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 't is a condition they account gentle: and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod, and be off to them most counterfeitly; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man, and give it bountiful to the desirers: therefore, beseech you I may be consul.

5 CITIZEN. We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

4 CITIZEN. You have received many wounds for your country.

81. *Re-enter* . . . | Enter . . . Ff. 84, 87, 101. 4 CITIZEN Camb Globe | 1, Ff. | 1 Cit. Rowe | Third Cit. Reed. 86. **enigma?** | Ænigma? Rowe | Ænigma. Ff. 99. 5 CITIZEN Camb | 2. Ff.

92. **sworn brother.** In mediæval chivalry the brothers in arms (*fratres jurati*) vowed to share each other's fortunes. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, I, i, 72–73: "He hath every month a new sworn brother."

93. **condition:** disposition, temper. So in V, iv, 10.

95. **be off to them:** be off with my cap to them. Cf. II, ii, 24.

CORIOLANUS. I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no farther.

BOTH CITIZENS. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily!

[*Exeunt*]

CORIOLANUS. Most sweet voices!
Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we dŏ deserve.
Why in this woolvish toge should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,
Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to 't:

106. BOTH CITIZENS | Both Ff. — [*Exeunt*] Rowe | Ff omit. 108. **starve** F_4 | sterve $F_1F_2F_3$. 110. **toge** Malone (Steevens conj.) | tongue F_1 | gowne $F_2F_3F_4$. 111. **do** F_4 | does $F_1F_2F_3$. 112. **vouches?** F_4 | Vouches: $F_1F_2F_3$.

103. **seal**: confirm. To 'seal' a contract is to 'ratify' it.

109. Than be humiliated by having to beg for the wages that we have already earned. The rhymed couplets in lines 108–119 indicate the emotional excitement of Coriolanus and give epigrammatic edge to his contempt. 'Deserve' rhymes with 'starve' (see textual variants). Cf. 'carve' and 'serve,' *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV, i, 55, 56.

110. **woolvish toge**: wolfish toga. 'Toge' is a monosyllabic form of 'toga,' the gown worn by the Romans in time of peace. Here the reference may be to the *toga candida*, which was worn by those who canvassed for office. The toga was made of undyed wool. A double meaning was probably intended here in 'woolvish,' referring both to the material of the gown and to the fact that the speaker is really playing the part of the wolf in sheep's clothing, wearing the "napless vesture of humility" (II, i, 225), while he is conscious of being anything but humble.

111. 'Hob' and 'Dick' are Roman roughs with common English names. Another example like 'divines' (line 54) of what Verity calls the "frank Elizabethanism of Shakespeare's Roman plays."

112. The 'vouches' are 'needless' because in his opinion the voice of the people should have no effect on the choice of a consul.

What custom wills, in all things should we do 't,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,
Let the high office and the honour go
To one that would do thus. I am half through:
The one part suffered, the other will I do.

Re-enter three Citizens *more*

Here come moe voices.
Your voices: for your voices I have fought;
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six
I have seen and heard of; for your voices have
Done many things, some less, some more: your voices:
Indeed, I would be consul.

6 CITIZEN. He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice.

7 CITIZEN. Therefore let him be consul: the gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people!

ALL CITIZENS. Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul! [*Exeunt*]

CORIOLANUS. Worthy voices!

120. *Re-enter* . . . | Enter . . . Ff. | 6 Cit. Reed.
127. 6 CITIZEN Camb | 1. Cit. Ff | 5 Cit. Reed.
129. 7 CITIZEN Camb | 2. Cit. Ff
130. good Ff | a good Rowe.
132. [*Exeunt*] Rowe | Ff omit.

120–125. The spirit of this speech is one of irony and burlesque. The repetition of 'voices' and the affected grandiloquence of lines 123–124 emphasize this. — **moe**: more. In Middle English 'moe,' or 'mo,' was used of number, and with collective nouns; 'more' had reference specifically to size. See Murray.

Re-enter MENENIUS, *with* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS

MENENIUS. You have stood your limitation, and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice: remains
That in th' official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.
CORIOLANUS. Is this done?
SICINIUS. The custom of request you have discharg'd:
The people do admit you, and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.
CORIOLANUS. Where? at the senate-house?
SICINIUS. There, Coriolanus.
CORIOLANUS. May I change these garments?
SICINIUS. You may, sir.
CORIOLANUS. That I 'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to th' senate-house.
MENENIUS. I 'll keep you company. Will you along?
BRUTUS. We stay here for the people.
SICINIUS. Fare you well.
[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* MENENIUS]
He has it now; and, by his looks, methinks
'T is warm at 's heart.
BRUTUS. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds. Will you dismiss the people?

147. Scene VIII Pope.

134. **your limitation**: your appointed time, the time required of you.
135. **remains**: it remains. For this form see Abbott, § 404.
137. **Anon**: immediately. So in line 140. Cf. 'presently,' line 248.
140. **upon your approbation**: to confirm your election. Cf. line 246.

Re-enter Citizens

SICINIUS. How now, my masters! have you chose this man?

1 CITIZEN. He has our voices, sir.

BRUTUS. We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.

2 CITIZEN. Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

3 CITIZEN. Certainly
He flouted us downright.

1 CITIZEN. No, 't is his kind of speech; he did not mock us.

2 CITIZEN. Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He us'd us scornfully: he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for 's country.

SICINIUS. Why, so he did, I am sure.

CITIZENS. No, no; no man saw 'em.

3 CITIZEN. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
'I would be consul,' says he: 'aged custom,
But by your voices, will not so permit me:
Your voices therefore.' When we granted that,
Here was 'I thank you for your voices: thank you:
Your most sweet voices: now you have left your voices,
I have no further with you.' Was not this mockery?

SICINIUS. Why either were you ignorant to see 't?

150. *Re-enter* Citizens | Enter the Plebeians Ff.
153. **notice** Ff | notion Dyce.
160. CITIZENS | All Ff.
162. **hat** Ff | cap Pope.
169. **ignorant** Ff | impotent Hanmer.

163. **aged custom.** Historically this was but eighteen years after the expulsion of Tarquin and the establishment of the consulship.

169. **ignorant to see 't:** too stupid to see it.

Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?
BRUTUS. Could you not have told him,
As you were lesson'd, when he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,
He was your enemy; ever spake against
Your liberties and the charters that you bear
I' th' body of the weal; and now, arriving
A place of potency, and sway o' th' state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to th' plebeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
Would think upon you for your voices, and
Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.
SICINIUS. Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advis'd, had touch'd his spirit
And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd
Either his gracious promise, which you might,
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to;
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,

177. **A place** $F_1F_2F_3$ | At place F_4.

175. **charters**: political rights. Cf. I, ix, 14.

176. **weal**: state, body politic. Cf. I, i, 146; III, i, 176. — **arriving**: arriving at. Prepositions are frequently omitted after verbs of motion. See Abbott, § 198.

179. **plebeii**: plebeians. The Latin name, here pronounced 'plē'be-ī.'

186. **touch'd**: tested. The metaphor is that of a touchstone. Cf. 'friends of noble touch,' IV, i, 49.

190–193. Shakespeare has many metaphors of a high-spirited horse.

Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught; so, putting him to rage,
You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler,
And pass'd him unelected.

BRUTUS. Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt,
When he did need your loves; and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgment?

SICINIUS. Have you,
Ere now, denied the asker? and now again,
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues?

3 CITIZEN. He 's not confirm'd; we may deny him yet.

2 CITIZEN. And will deny him:
I 'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

1 CITIZEN. I twice five hundred, and their friends to piece 'em.

BRUTUS. Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,
They have chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties, make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking,
As therefore kept to do so.

SICINIUS. Let them assemble;
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke

207. **I twice** $F_1F_2F_3$ | I, twice F_4 | Ay, twice Rowe.

200. Against what your judgment counseled or commanded.
212. **therefore.** Some modern editors substitute 'they are.'

Your ignorant election: enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you: besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed,
How in his suit he scorn'd you: but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
Th' apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

BRUTUS. Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes, that we labour'd,
No impediment between, but that you must
Cast your election on him.

SICINIUS. Say you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections; and that your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul: lay the fault on us.

BRUTUS. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you,
How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continued, and what stock he springs of,

214. **enforce**: lay stress on. Cf. III, iii, 3, and see note.

219. **portance**: bearing. 'Port' is the more common form.

222–224. **we labour'd . . . on him**: we took pains that there might be no obstacle to prevent you from voting for him. Here we have an excellent piece of that demagogical craft which is summed up in the proverb of holding the dog and hounding it.

231. **youngly**: early. Cf. *Sonnets*, XI, 3: "And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestowest." "But Martius being more inclined to the wars than any other gentleman of his time, began from his childhood to give himself to handle weapons, and daily did exercise himself therein: and he esteemed outward armour to no purpose, unless one were naturally armed within." — Plutarch.

The noble house, o' th' Martians; from whence came
That Ancus Martius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king;
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither,
[And he that was surnamed Censorinus,]

233–240. "The house of the Martians at Rome was of the number of the Patricians, out of the which have sprung many noble personages, whereof Ancus Martius was one, King Numa's daughter's son, who was King of Rome after Tullus Hostilius. Of the same house were Publius and Quintus, who brought to Rome their best water they had, by conduits." — Plutarch.

238–240. This is the textual crux of the play. The Folios read:

> And Nobly nam'd, so twice being Censor,
> Was his great Ancestor.

The context shows that something is wanting. The easiest assumption is that the printer has omitted a line. The striking similarity of the two lines given in the emended text would make it easy for a printer to omit one or the other. Such an omission is not unusual even in these days of careful typesetting. The material for the missing line is supplied from Plutarch: "Censorinus also came of that family, that was so surnamed, because the people had chosen him censor twice." The only question is that of arrangement. The line should begin with 'And,' the natural connective with what precedes. 'Censorinus' is put at the end of the line because it agrees with the context in preserving a climax as in lines 247–249, and places 'Censorinus' over 'Censor' (spelled with a capital in the Folios). Furthermore, this position of 'Censorinus' is supported by the only two passages in Shakespeare where the word 'surnamed' occurs (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V, ii, 553; *Titus Andronicus*, I, i, 23). The word 'so' in the passage from Plutarch merely anticipates the causal clause, and hence plays no part in the emendation. A widely accepted rearrangement of the lines is found in the Globe text:

> And [Censorinus] nobly named so,
> Twice being [by the people chosen] censor,
> Was his great ancestor.

And nobly nam'd so, twice being censor,
Was his great ancestor.
SICINIUS. One thus descended,
That hath beside well in his person wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances; but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,
That he 's your fixed enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.
BRUTUS. Say, you ne'er had done 't
(Harp on that still) but by our putting on;
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to th' Capitol.
ALL. We will so: almost all
Repent in their election. [*Exeunt* Citizens]
BRUTUS. Let them go on:
This mutiny were better put in hazard,
Than stay, past doubt, for greater:
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.
SICINIUS. To th' Capitol, come:
We will be there before the stream o' th' people;
And this shall seem, as partly 't is, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt*]

251. [*Exeunt* Citizens] Exeunt Plebeians Ff.

244. **Scaling**: putting in the scales, weighing, estimating.
247. **putting on**: instigating, inciting. Cf. 'put on,' II, i, 247.
248. **presently**: immediately. — **drawn your number**: assembled those who think as you do. Cf. lines 206–207.
254–255. Be ready to take advantage of his anger.

ACT III

SCENE I. *Rome. A street*

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, *all the* Gentry, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, *and other* Senators

CORIOLANUS. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?

LARTIUS. He had, my lord, and that it was which caus'd
Our swifter composition.

CORIOLANUS. So then the Volsces stand but as at first:
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon 's again.

COMINIUS. They are worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

CORIOLANUS. Saw you Aufidius?

LARTIUS. On safe-guard he came to me, and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town: he is retired to Antium.

CORIOLANUS. Spoke he of me?

LARTIUS. He did, my lord,

CORIOLANUS. How? what?

ACT III. SCENE I | Actus Tertius Ff. — *Rome. A street* | Ff omit.
1. **head?** Rowe | head. Ff.
10. **vilely** F_4 | vildly $F_1F_2F_3$.

1. **made new head**: collected a fresh army. Cf. II, ii, 85.

3. **Our swifter composition**: coming to terms sooner than we had intended. We still speak of 'composing' (settling) differences.

9. **On safe-guard**: with a guard (i.e. of Roman troops) to protect him.

LARTIUS. How often he had met you, sword to sword:
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most: that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be call'd your vanquisher.
CORIOLANUS. At Antium lives he?
LARTIUS. At Antium.
CORIOLANUS. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' th' common mouth. I do despise them:
For they do prank them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance.
SICINIUS. Pass no further.
CORIOLANUS. Ha? what is that?
BRUTUS. It will be dangerous to go on. No further.
CORIOLANUS. What makes this change?
MENENIUS. The matter?
COMINIUS. Hath he not pass'd the noble and the common?
BRUTUS. Cominius, no.
CORIOLANUS. Have I had children's voices?
1 SENATOR. Tribunes, give way; he shall to th' market-place.

29. noble . . . common F_1 | Noble . . . Commons $F_2F_3F_4$ | nobles . . . commons Rowe.
31, 63, 75. 1 SENATOR | 1. S. Capell | Senat. Ff.

16. **To hopeless restitution**: beyond hope of recovery.
19–20. Ironical. Coriolanus little realizes how soon he will go to Antium, and with what change of feelings.
24. **Against all noble sufferance**: beyond the endurance of the nobles.

BRUTUS. The people are incens'd against him.
SICINIUS. Stop,
Or all will fall in broil.
CORIOLANUS. Are these your herd?
Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your offices?
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?
MENENIUS. Be calm, be calm.
CORIOLANUS. It is a purpos'd thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility:
Suffer 't, and live with such as cannot rule,
Nor ever will be ruled.
BRUTUS. Call 't not a plot:
The people cry you mock'd them; and of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repin'd,
Scandal'd the suppliants for the people, call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.
CORIOLANUS. Why, this was known before.
BRUTUS. Not to them all.
CORIOLANUS. Have you inform'd them sithence?

44. suppliants for F_4 | Suppliants: for $F_1F_2F_3$.

43–45. "The common people stood also about the palace where the council was kept, . . . persuading themselves that the corn they had bought should be sold good cheap, and that which was given should be divided by the poll, without paying a penny. . . . But Martius . . . did somewhat sharply take up those who went about to gratify the people therein: and called them people-pleasers, and traitors to the Nobility." — Plutarch.

47. sithence. The uncontracted form of 'since.' Shakespeare uses 'sithence' and the shortened form 'sith,' like 'since,' both as an adverb of time and as a subordinating conjunction.

BRUTUS. How? I inform them?
COMINIUS. You are like to do such business.
BRUTUS. Not unlike
Each way, to better yours.
CORIOLANUS. Why then should I be consul? by yond clouds
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.
SICINIUS. You show too much of that
For which the people stir: if you will pass
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit;
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.
MENENIUS. Let 's be calm.
COMINIUS. The people are abus'd; set on. This palt'ring
Becomes not Rome; nor has Coriolanus
Deserv'd this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely
I' th' plain way of his merit.

48. You . . . business. Theobald gave this speech to Coriolanus.

48–49. Not unlike Each way, to better yours: not unlikely to surpass your action in every way.

58. abus'd: deceived, imposed upon. The word means literally 'use amiss.' — **set on.** This may be either in the same construction as 'abus'd' and mean 'instigated,' 'led on,' or it may be an imperative in the sense of 'proceed,' 'on to the market-place!' — **palt'ring**: shuffling, equivocating. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, II, i, 124–126:

> what other bond
> Than secret Romans that have spoke the word,
> And will not palter?

60. dishonour'd rub: dishonourable thwarting. Murray defines 'rub' as "an obstacle or impediment by which a bowl is hindered in, or diverted from, its proper course." Cf. *Henry V*, V, ii, 33: "What rub or what impediment there is."

CORIOLANUS. Tell me of corn!
This was my speech, and I will speak 't again —
MENENIUS. Not now, not now.
1 SENATOR. Not in this heat, sir, now.
CORIOLANUS. Now as I live, I will. My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons:
For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them
Regard me, as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves: I say again,
In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have ploughed for, sow'd, and scatter'd,
By mingling them with us, the honour'd number,
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that
Which they have given to beggars.
MENENIUS. Well, no more.
1 SENATOR. No more words, we beseech you.
CORIOLANUS. How? no more?
As for my country, I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay against those measles
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.

62. **again** — Rowe | againe. Ff.
66. **many** F_4 | Meynie F_1.
71. **ploughed** | plowed Ff.
78. **measles** Rowe | Meazels Ff.

67–68. "Let them look in the mirror which I hold up to them, a mirror which does not flatter, and see themselves." — Johnson.

69–71. "They nourished against themselves the naughty seed and cockle of insolence and sedition, which had been sowed and scattered abroad amongst the people." — Plutarch.

78. **measles**: leprous wretches. The word meant both 'lepers' and 'leprosy.'

BRUTUS. You speak o' th' people,
As if you were a god, to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.
SICINIUS. 'T were well
We let the people know 't.
MENENIUS. What, what? his choler?
CORIOLANUS. Choler?
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 't would be my mind!
SICINIUS. It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.
CORIOLANUS. Shall remain?
Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you
His absolute 'shall'?
COMINIUS. 'T was from the canon.
CORIOLANUS. 'Shall?'
O good, but most unwise patricians! why,
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory 'shall,' being but
The horn and noise o' th' monster's, wants not spirit

90. **canon** | Cannon Ff.
91. **good** Pope Camb | God Ff.
92. **reckless** Hanmer | wreaklesse F1F2 | wreakless F3F4.
95. **monster's** Delius | monsters Ff | monster Capell.

89. **Triton**. The sea demigod that blows his horn of conch shell to raise or calm the waves. A great personage to the little fish.

90. **from the canon**: contrary to the law. Cf. III, iii, 12–18. Some editors interpret it 'according to the rule.' In Porter and Clarke's 'First Folio' edition, the 'Cannon' of the Folios is retained in the sense of 'big gun.'

93. **Hydra**. See note, II, iii, 15. Cf. IV, i 1–2.

95. **The horn and noise**: the noisy horn. A hendiadys.

To say he 'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then vail your ignorance: if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity: if you are learn'd,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,
If they be senators: and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,
And such a one as he, who puts his 'shall,'
His popular 'shall,' against a graver bench
Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself,
It makes the consuls base! and my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter 'twixt the gap of both, and take
The one by th' other.

COMINIUS. Well, on to th' market-place.

CORIOLANUS. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o' th' storehouse gratis, as 't was us'd
Sometime in Greece —

115. Greece — F_3F_4 | Greece. F_1F_2.

98. **vail**: lower (in token of submission). Cf. *1 Henry VI*, V, iii, 25: "France must vail her lofty plumed crest." This word is distinct from 'veil.'

99. **Your dangerous lenity**: lenity dangerous to you.

101. **have cushions by you**: sit beside you (in the Capitol).

102–104. **and they . . . palates theirs**: and they are no less than senators when in the blending of your voices and theirs the flavour tastes most like theirs. The predominant flavour is plebeian.

107. **Greece**. The birthplace of democracy. See note, lines 116–118.

110. **confusion**: utter ruin. So in line 190.

111. **take**: destroy. Cf. IV, iv, 20.

MENENIUS. Well, well, no more of that.
CORIOLANUS. Though there the people had more absolute power,
I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.
BRUTUS. Why, shall the people give
One that speaks thus their voice?
CORIOLANUS. I 'll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
Was not our recompense, resting well assur'd
They ne'er did service for't: being press'd to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
They would not thread the gates: this kind of service
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' th' war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valour, spoke not for them. Th' accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,

120. worthier F_1 | worthie F_2 | worthy F_3F_4.

116–118. **Though there . . . the state.** "They that gave counsel and persuaded, that the corn should be given out to the common people *gratis*, as they used to do in the cities of Greece, where the people had more absolute power, did but only nourish their disobedience, which would break out in the end, to the utter ruin and overthrow of the whole state." — Plutarch.

120–128. **They know . . . senate.** "For they will not think it is done in recompence of their service past, sithence they know well enough they have so oft refused to go to the wars when they were commanded: neither for their mutinies when they went with us, whereby they have rebelled and forsaken their country."—Plutarch. — **more worthier.** Double comparatives and superlatives, to give emphasis, are common in Shakespeare. See Abbott, § 11.

124. **thread**: pass through. Cf. *Richard II*, V, v, 17: "To thread the postern of a small needle's eye."

All cause unborn, could never be the native
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bosom-multiplied digest
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What 's like to be their words, 'We did request it,
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands.' Thus we debase
The nature of our seats, and make the rabble
Call our cares fears; which will in time
Break ope the locks o' th' senate, and bring in
The crows to peck the eagles.

MENENIUS. Come, enough.

BRUTUS. Enough, with over-measure.

CORIOLANUS. No, take more.
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal! This double worship

129. **native** Ff Camb | motive Singer Globe. 131. **bosom-multiplied** Ff | bisson multitude Dyce Globe.

129. **All cause unborn**: no cause existing. — **native**: parent, source. 'Native' carries out the figure suggested in 'unborn.'

131. **this bosom-multiplied.** Coriolanus again refers to the plebeians as the Hydra, line 93. In II, iii, 15, he calls them the 'many-headed,' referring to their eating. Here he uses the word 'bosom' as the seat of their thoughts and feelings. How, he asks, can the multitude, with such feelings against the senate, be made to think that the senate is courteous to them? For 'bosom' in this sense compare *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, i, 216; *Othello*, III, i, 57–58; *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, i, 31. A close parallel to 'this bosom-multiplied' is 'the common bosom' (*King Lear*, V, iii, 49), meaning the hearts of the common people.

132–133. Let their past and present deeds be taken as an indication of what they are likely to speak openly.

134. **greater poll**: majority. Cf. III, iii, 10.

142. **Seal**: confirm, attest. — **worship**: dignity, authority.

(Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason: where gentry, title, wisdom
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance) it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
To unstable slightness. Purpose so barr'd, it follows,
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore beseech you
(You that will be less fearful than discreet,
That love the fundamental part of state
More than you doubt the change on 't; that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To jump a body with a dangerous physic,
That 's sure of death without it) at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison. Your dishonour
Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state
Of that integrity which should become 't;
Not having the power to do the good it would
For th' ill which doth control 't.

BRUTUS. Has said enough.

143. Where one Rowe Globe Delius | Whereon Ff. 144. reason F_1 | season $F_2F_3F_4$. 152. on 't F_1 | oft F_2 | of 't F_3F_4.

144. **without**: outside, beyond. — **gentry**: gentle birth.

145. **conclude**: come to terms, settle a question.

152. **doubt the change on 't**: dread the change of it.

154. **jump**: imperil. The 'dangerous physic' which Coriolanus contemplates is the abolition of the tribuneship. For 'jump' as a noun meaning 'hazard (of battle)' compare *Antony and Cleopatra*, III, viii, 6.

156. **The multitudinous tongue**. Cf. 'The tongues o' th' common mouth,' line 22. The Hydra is still in his mind. See note, line 131.

156–157. **lick The sweet**. That is, take part in state affairs.

159. **integrity**: entirety. The original (Latin) meaning. The state is now divided against itself.

SICINIUS. Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.

CORIOLANUS. Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee!
What should the people do with these bald tribunes?
On whom depending, their obedience fails
To th' greater bench: in a rebellion,
When what 's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen: in a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' th' dust.

BRUTUS. Manifest treason!

SICINIUS. This a consul? no.

Enter an Ædile

BRUTUS. The ædiles, ho! let him be apprehended.

SICINIUS. Go call the people: [*Exit* Ædile.] in whose name myself
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to th' public weal. Obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

174. [*Exit* Ædile.] Collier | Ff omit.

165. bald: senseless. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 65: "bald, unjointed chat." Verity suggests 'in their dotage' as the meaning.

167–168. The punctuation of the Folios is "To' th' greater Bench, in a Rebellion: When what 's not meet, but . . ."

173. ædiles: police. These magistrates originally had charge of public buildings, and hence the name, from *aedes*, 'house.'

174. Go call. The Folios do not place a comma after 'go,' as is usually done in modern editions. In the Elizabethan period 'go' and 'come' still took the simple infinitive (without 'to') to express purpose, where to-day we may still use the infinitive with 'to,' but prefer 'and' with a coördinate verb. Cf. line 225.

CORIOLANUS. Hence, old goat!

SENATORS, ETC. We 'll surety him.

COMINIUS. Ag'd sir, hands off.

CORIOLANUS. Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.

SICINIUS. Help, ye citizens! 180

Enter a rabble of Citizens, *with the* Ædiles

MENENIUS. On both sides more respect.

SICINIUS. Here 's he that would take from you all your power.

BRUTUS. Seize him, ædiles!

CITIZENS. Down with him! down with him!

SENATORS, ETC. Weapons, weapons, weapons! 185

[*They all bustle about* CORIOLANUS]

'Tribunes!' 'Patricians!' 'Citizens!' 'what, ho!'
'Sicinius!' 'Brutus!' 'Coriolanus!' 'Citizens!'

CITIZENS. Peace, peace, peace! stay, hold, peace!

MENENIUS. What is about to be? I am out of breath.
Confusion 's near. I cannot speak. You, tribunes 190
To th' people! Coriolanus, patience!
Speak, good Sicinius.

SICINIUS. Hear me, people; peace!

CITIZENS. Let 's hear our tribune: peace! speak, speak, speak!

178. SENATORS, ETC. | All Ff.
181. *Enter*... Citizens... Ædiles | Enter... Plebeians... Ædiles Ff. — Scene II Pope.
184, 188, 193, etc. CITIZENS | All Ff.
185. SENATORS, ETC. | 2 Sen. Ff.
190. **Confusion 's near** F_3F_4 | Confusions neere F_1.

190. **Confusion**: ruin. Cf. line 110. — **You**: you speak. Some editors read "You, tribunes, Speak . . ."

SICINIUS. You are at point to lose your liberties:
Martius would have all from you; Martius,
Whom late you have nam'd for consul.
MENENIUS. Fie, fie, fie!
This is the way to kindle, not to quench.
1 SENATOR. To unbuild the city, and to lay all flat.
SICINIUS. What is the city but the people?
CITIZENS. True,
The people are the city.
BRUTUS. By the consent of all, we were establish'd
The people's magistrates.
CITIZENS. You so remain.
MENENIUS. And so are like to do.
COMINIUS. That is the way to lay the city flat,
To bring the roof to the foundation,
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,
In heaps and piles of ruin.
SICINIUS. This deserves death.
BRUTUS. Or let us stand to our authority,
Or let us lose it: we do here pronounce,
Upon the part o' th' people, in whose power
We were elected theirs, Martius is worthy
Of present death.
SICINIUS. Therefore lay hold of him:

198. 1 SENATOR | Sena. Ff.

206. **distinctly ranges**: stand distinct and in order.

207. **This**. The reference is to the attack made by Coriolanus on the liberties of the people. Pope and some modern editors give this speech to Coriolanus, but, as Keightley says, he "is standing apart, in proud and sullen rage."

212. **present**: immediate. As in III, iii, 21; IV, iii, 42. Often so. Cf. 'presently,' III, iii, 12; IV, v, 214.

Bear him to th' rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.

BRUTUS. Ædiles, seize him!

CITIZENS. Yield, Martius, yield!

MENENIUS. Hear me one word: 215
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

ÆDILES. Peace, peace!

MENENIUS. [*To* BRUTUS] Be that you seem, truly your country's friend,
And temp'rately proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.

BRUTUS. Sir, those cold ways, 220
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous,
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.

[CORIOLANUS *draws his sword*]

CORIOLANUS. No, I 'll die here:
There 's some among you have beheld me fighting:
Come try upon yourselves what you have seen me. 225

MENENIUS. Down with that sword! Tribunes, withdraw awhile.

215. CITIZENS | Cit. Capell | All Ple. Ff. 218. [*To* BRUTUS] Camb | Ff omit. —friend Ff | friends Rowe.

213–214. "Whereupon Sicinius, the cruellest and stoutest of the Tribunes, after he had whispered a little with his companions, did openly pronounce, in the face of all the people, Martius as condemned by the Tribunes to die. Then presently he commanded the Ædiles to apprehend him, and carry him straight to the rock Tarpeian, and to cast him headlong down the same." — Plutarch.

216, 236. **Beseech.** The subject 'I' before 'beseech' and 'pray' is frequently omitted. Cf. IV, v, 22.

225. **Come try.** Cf. 'Go call,' line 174, and see note.

BRUTUS. Lay hands upon him.

MENENIUS. Help Martius, help:
You that be noble, help him, young and old!

CITIZENS. Down with him, down with him! 229

[*In this mutiny, the* Tribunes, *the* Ædiles, *and the* People *are beat in*]

MENENIUS. Go, get you to your house: be gone, away!
All will be naught else.

2 SENATOR. Get you gone.

COMINIUS. Stand fast;
We have as many friends as enemies.

MENENIUS. Shall it be put to that?

1 SENATOR. The gods forbid!
I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;
Leave us to cure this cause.

MENENIUS. For 't is a sore upon us, 235
You cannot tent yourself: be gone, beseech you.

COMINIUS. Come, sir, along with us.

CORIOLANUS. I would they were barbarians, as they are

229. **him!** | him. *Exeunt* Ff.
230. **your** Rowe Camb Globe | our Ff.
233. 1 SENATOR | Sena. Ff.
237. COMINIUS | Com. $F_2F_3F_4$ | Corio. F_1.
238-242. CORIOLANUS. **I . . . Capitol . . .** MENENIUS. **Be gone . . . another** Steevens | *Mene.* I . . . Capitoll: Be gone . . . another Ff.

227. **Help Martius, help.** "The noblemen, being much troubled to see so much force and rigour used, began to cry aloud 'Help Martius': so those that laid hands on him being repulsed, they compassed him in round among themselves, and some of them, holding up their hands to the people, besought them not to handle him thus cruelly." — Plutarch.

236. **tent**: probe. See note, I, ix, 31.

238–240. **I would . . . th' Capitol.** As the textual notes show, the Folios give this speech to Menenius. Steevens, following Tyrwhitt's conjecture, transferred it to Coriolanus.

Though in Rome litter'd: not Romans, as they are not,
Though calved i' th' porch o' th' Capitol.

MENENIUS. Be gone;
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;
One time will owe another.

CORIOLANUS. On fair ground
I could beat forty of them.

MENENIUS. I could myself
Take up a brace o' th' best of them; yea, the two tribunes.

COMINIUS. But now 't is odds beyond arithmetic,
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands
Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,
Before the tag return? whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear
What they are us'd to bear.

MENENIUS. Pray you, be gone:
I 'll try whether my old wit be in request

242. CORIOLANUS | Corio. F1 | Com. F2F3F4.

242. **One time will owe another**: one time will have its debt to pay to another; "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (*Galatians*, vi, 7); "they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" (*Hosea*, viii, 7). Coriolanus is urged to curb his wrath, and these words are added as a warning rather than as a promise of future victory. Venting his rage will only add fuel to the flame of feeling already kindled against him. This is supported by Menenius's words in lines 256–260.

243. **forty**. Used indefinitely to express a large number. Commonly so in the Bible. Cf. *Genesis*, vii, 4; *Exodus*, xvi, 35; xxiv, 18.

248. **tag**: rabble, tag and rag. 'Tag' meant originally "one of the narrow . . . pendent pieces made by slashing the skirt of a garment; hence, any hanging, ragged or torn piece." — Murray. Cf. 'fragments,' I, i, 217, and see note.

251. "Menenius' 'old wit' has been matched against the people and their tribunes before . . . without any marked success."—Chambers.

With those that have but little: this must be patch'd
With cloth of any colour.

COMINIUS. Nay, come away.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, *and others*]

A PATRICIAN. This man has marr'd his fortune.

MENENIUS. His nature is too noble for the world:
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for 's power to thunder: his heart 's his mouth:
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent,
And, being angry, does forget that ever
He heard the name of death. [*A noise within*]
Here 's goodly work!

A PATRICIAN. I would they were a-bed!

MENENIUS. I would they were in Tiber! What the vengeance!
Could he not speak 'em fair?

Re-enter BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS, *with the rabble*

SICINIUS. Where is this viper,
That would depopulate the city, and
Be every man himself?

MENENIUS. You worthy tribunes —

SICINIUS. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands: he hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
Than the severity of the public power,
Which he so sets at nought.

1 CITIZEN. He shall well know

253. [. . . COMINIUS, *and others*] Capell | and Cominius Ff.
254. Scene IV Pope. — A PATRICIAN | Patri. Ff | 1. P. Capell.
261. A PATRICIAN | Patri. Ff | 2. P. Capell.
263. *Re-enter* . . . *rabble* | Enter . . . rabble againe Ff.

The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.

CITIZENS. He shall, sure on 't.

MENENIUS. Sir, sir —

SICINIUS. Peace!

MENENIUS. Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt
With modest warrant.

SICINIUS. Sir, how comes 't that you
Have holp to make this rescue?

MENENIUS. Hear me speak?
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults —

SICINIUS. Consul? what consul?

MENENIUS. The consul Coriolanus.

BRUTUS. He consul!

CITIZENS. No, no, no, no, no.

MENENIUS. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I would crave a word or two;
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.

SICINIUS. Speak briefly, then;

272. **shall, sure on 't** | shall sure ont F_1 | shall sure out $F_2F_3F_4$ | shall be sure on 't Pope. 272, 280. CITIZENS | All Ff.

274–275. **havoc.** The phrase 'cry havoc' (Old French *crier havot*) meant originally "to give to an army the order *havoc!*, as the signal for the seizure of spoil, and so of general spoliation or pillage." — Murray. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, III, i, 273; *King John*, II, i, 357. — **hunt With modest warrant.** It was a high crime for anybody to give the signal ('havoc!') without authority from the general in chief.

276. **Hear me speak?** will you hear me speak? The punctuation is that of the Folios. Most editors change the question to an imperative.

For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor: to eject him hence
Were but one danger, and to keep him here
Our certain death: therefore it is decreed
He dies to-night.

MENENIUS. Now the good gods forbid
That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deserved children is enroll'd
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own!

SICINIUS. He 's a disease that must be cut away.

MENENIUS. O, he 's a limb, that has but a disease;
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.
What has he done to Rome that 's worthy death?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost
(Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath
By many an ounce) he dropp'd it for his country:
And what is left, to lose it by his country
Were to us all that do't and suffer it,
A brand to th' end o' th' world.

SICINIUS. This is clean kam.

286. **viperous** F_4 | Viparous $F_1F_2F_3$. 303. **kam** F_4 | kamme F_1F_2 | kamm F_3.
301. **lose** F_3F_4 | loose F_1F_2.

287. **but one danger**: nothing but a continual source of danger. Editors have apparently overlooked the significance of 'but.' Theobald changed 'one' to 'our'; the Cambridge editors suggest reading 'but moe danger.'

291. **deserved**: deserving. See Abbott, §§ 372–374.

292. **Jove's own book**: the book of life. "A Jewish not a Roman idea." — Herford. Cf. *Malachi*, iii, 16; *Revelation*, xx, 12.

303. **clean kam**: all wrong. 'Kam,' or 'cam,' is a Welsh word, meaning 'crooked.' Cf. Cotgrave's *Dictionarie* (1611): "*contrepoil*, against the wooll, the wrong way, cleane contrarie, quite kamme."

BRUTUS. Merely awry: when he did love his country,
It honour'd him.
MENENIUS. The service of the foot,
Being once gangren'd, is not then respected
For what before it was.
BRUTUS. We 'll hear no more:
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence,
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.
MENENIUS. One word more, one word:
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscann'd swiftness, will, too late,
Tie leaden pounds to 's heels. Proceed by process,
Lest parties (as he is belov'd) break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.
BRUTUS. If it were so —
SICINIUS. What do ye talk?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?
Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? come.
MENENIUS. Consider this: he has been bred i' th' wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill-school'd

315. so — F_3F_4 | so? F_1F_2. F_1 | smot; F_2 | smot, F_3 | smote, F_4.
318. smote? | smot? Capell | smot: 320. he Rowe | a Ff.

304. **Merely**: entirely, absolutely. Cf. *Richard II*, II, i, 243.

305–307. **The service . . . it was.** The Folios give this speech to Menenius; Hanmer, following Warburton, transferred it to Sicinius; Lettsom continued it to Brutus. It would be dramatically untrue to put into the mouth of either tribune an argument so palpably unjust. Menenius is to be understood as urging the logical consequences of the tribune's position, by way of refuting it.

309. **his infection**: the infection of his evil qualities.

313. **to 's**: to his, to its. 'Its' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day. See Abbott, § 228.

In bolted language: meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I 'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer by a lawful form
(In peace) to his utmost peril.

1 SENATOR. Noble tribunes,
It is the humane way: the other course
Will prove too bloody; and the end of it
Unknown to the beginning.

SICINIUS. Noble Menenius,
Be you then as the people's officer:
Masters, lay down your weapons.

BRUTUS. Go not home.

SICINIUS. Meet on the market-place: we 'll attend you there:
Where, if you bring not Martius, we 'll proceed
In our first way.

MENENIUS. I 'll bring him to you.
[*To the* Senators] Let me desire your company: he must come,
Or what is worst will follow.

1 SENATOR. Pray you let 's to him.

[*Exeunt*]

323. **bring him** Pope | bring him in peace Ff.
334. [*To the* Senators] Hanmer | Ff omit.
335. 1 SENATOR | Sena. Ff. — [*Exeunt*] Exeunt Omnes Ff.

321. **bolted**: sifted, refined. The metaphor is found in *Henry V*, II, ii, 137: "Such and so finely bolted didst thou seem." — **meal and bran**. Cf. I, i, 140–141.

323. The Folios add 'in peace' (see textual notes), but the words were obviously caught up by a compositor's error from line 325.

324–325. **answer . . . to his utmost peril**: answer . . . even to the cost of his life. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, III, iv, 43: "I 'll meet thee to thy cost."

SCENE II. *A room in* CORIOLANUS'S *house*

Enter CORIOLANUS *with* Nobles

CORIOLANUS. Let them pull all about mine ears; present me
Death on the wheel, or at wild horses' heels;
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch
Below the beam of sight; yet will I still
Be thus to them.

Enter VOLUMNIA

A NOBLE. You do the nobler.
CORIOLANUS. I muse my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads
In congregations, to yawn, be still and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance stood up

SCENE II Capell | Scene V Pope | | Ff omit.
Ff omit.—*A room . . . house* Malone 9. **woollen** Rowe | Wollen Ff.

2. Shakespeare may have been thinking of his own time, but he was evidently acquainted with the classics. Punishment on the wheel is suggested in the Greek myth of Ixion, although apparently not used in ancient Rome. Tullus Hostilius had Metius Suffetius torn to pieces by horses (*Æneid*, VIII, 642), which Livy informs us was the only instance of such punishment in Roman history down to the end of the Republic.

5. **beam of sight**: range of vision.

9. **woollen vassals**. A similar contemptuous reference to the coarse clothing of the working classes is in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, i, 79. The expression may also imply that the men are loafers and unfit for war.

12. **ordinance**: order, rank. From the sense of 'orderly arrangement.'

To speak of peace or war.

[*To* VOLUMNIA] I talk of you:
Why did you wish me milder? would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say, I play
The man I am.

VOLUMNIA. O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

CORIOLANUS. Let go.

VOLUMNIA. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, if
You had not show'd them how ye were dispos'd,
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

CORIOLANUS. Let them hang.

VOLUMNIA. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS *with the* Senators

MENENIUS. Come, come, you have been too rough, something too rough:
You must return and mend it.

1 SENATOR. There 's no remedy;

13. [*To* VOLUMNIA] Ff omit.
18. **Let** F_1F_2 | Lets F_3 | Let 's F_4.
21. **thwartings of** Theobald | things of Ff.
24. VOLUMNIA | Volum. Ff | A Patrician Globe.
26. 1 SENATOR | 1. S. Capell | Sen. Ff.

18. **Let go**: enough, let us have done with it.

21. **thwartings**. This, Theobald's emendation, is supported by the context and particularly by 'cross' in line 23.

23. **Ere . . . power**: while they still had it in their power.

24. Some editors give this speech to a Patrician, but Volumnia agrees with her son here to remind him that she feels as he does, and hereby she reveals the wisdom of her advice.

Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

VOLUMNIA. Pray, be counsell'd:
I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

MENENIUS. Well said, noble woman!
Before he should thus stoop to th' herd, but that
The violent fit o' th' time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

CORIOLANUS. What must I do?

MENENIUS. Return to th' tribunes.

CORIOLANUS. Well, what then? what then?

MENENIUS. Repent what you have spoke.

CORIOLANUS. For them? I cannot do it to the gods:
Must I then do't to them?

VOLUMNIA. You are too absolute;
Though therein you can never be too noble,
But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,
I' th' war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,
In peace what each of them by th' other lose,
That they combine not there.

CORIOLANUS. Tush, tush!

32. **herd** Theobald | heart Ff.
38. **them?** F_3F_4 | them, F_1F_2.
44. **lose** F_3F_4 | loose F_1F_2.
45. **there.** Steevens | there? Ff.

29. **little apt**: little pliable. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Daniel's conjecture of 'tickle-apt' was adopted. Other emendations suggested are 'little soft' (Singer), 'mettle apt' (Staunton), and 'little warp'd' (Bulloch).

39. **absolute**: positive, uncompromising. Cf. III, i, 90.

MENENIUS. A good demand.
VOLUMNIA. If it be honour in your wars to seem
The same you are not (which, for your best ends,
You adopt your policy) how is it less or worse
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honour, as in war, since that to both
It stands in like request?
CORIOLANUS. Why force you this?
VOLUMNIA. Because that now it lies you on to speak
To th' people; not by your own instruction,
Nor by th' matter which your heart prompts you,
But with such words that are but roted in
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.
Now, this no more dishonours you at all
Than to take in a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune, and
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with my nature, where

48. **adopt** $F_1F_2F_3$ | adapt F_4 | call Pope. — **is it** Ff | is 't Pope.
55. **roted in** Malone | roated in Ff | roated on Hanmer | rooted in Johnson.
57. **allowance** Ff | alliance Capell.

52. **it lies you on**: it is incumbent on you.

55. **roted**: learned by rote (and so spoken mechanically).

56. **though but bastards and**. Ingenious attempts have been made to emend this line. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Badham's conjecture "thought 's bastards, and but" was adopted.

57. **Of no allowance to**: utterly disavowed by. "Truth sits enthroned on your bosom to sanction your thoughts and language; but your words will be but illegitimate offspring, not born of your heart, having no approval as justification from that truth." — Crosby.

59. **take in**: capture, subdue. See note, I, ii, 24.

60. **put you to your fortune**: cause you to risk the fortunes of war. With 'to your fortune' compare 'to his utmost peril,' III, i, 325.

My fortunes and my friends at stake requir'd
I should do so in honour. I am in this
Your wife, your son: these senators, the nobles,
And you, will rather show our general louts,
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,
For the inheritance of their loves, and safeguard
Of what that want might ruin.

MENENIUS. Noble lady!
Come go with us; speak fair: you may salve so,
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss
Of what is past.

VOLUMNIA. I prithee now, my son,
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;
And thus far having stretch'd it (here be with them)
Thy knee bussing the stones (for in such business
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of th' ignorant
More learned than the ears) waving thy head,

64–65. **I am in this Your wife, your son.** Cf. *Matthew*, xii, 47–50.

65–66. The punctuation is that of the Folios. Most editors read, "Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles; And you will," etc. These changes are unnecessary and involve an awkward anti-climax.

66. **general louts**: common bumpkins. Cf. 'general filths,' *Timon of Athens*, IV, i, 6; 'the general ear,' *Hamlet*, II, ii, 589.

69. **that want**: the want of that ('the inheritance of their loves').

70–72. **you may . . . is past**: in this way you cannot only cure what is dangerous in the present, but retrieve what is lost.

73. **this bonnet**. Volumnia touches or points to his bonnet. The 'bonnet' was a soft hat without brim.

74. **thus far**. Volumnia bends to the ground. Her gestures and choice of words throughout the speech show Coriolanus how she despises the course of action she counsels him to follow. — **here be with them**: humour them in this.

77–78. The waving of the head indicates humility, and thus often corrects the proud heart, which holds the head aloft. 'Which' refers

Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest mulberry,
That will not hold the handling: or say to them,
Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person.

MENENIUS. This but done,
Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours;
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
As words to little purpose.

VOLUMNIA. Prithee now,
Go, and be rul'd: although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf
Than flatter him in a bower.

Enter COMINIUS

Here is Cominius.

COMINIUS. I have been i' th' market-place; and, sir, 't is fit

to 'waving thy head,' and is in the nominative absolute, a common construction in the Elizabethan period. See Abbott, § 376.

78. **thy stout heart.** "A stout man of nature." — Plutarch.

79. **Now humble:** now made humble. In earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Mason's substitution of 'bow' for 'now' was adopted.

83. **Were fit . . . to claim:** were as fit for thee to use as for them to claim. Cf. lines 124–125. For 'they' see Abbott, § 216.

85. **forsooth:** in very truth. This is the literal meaning.

88–89. **they have . . . little purpose:** to win their pardons costs no more than to speak idle words to them.

91. **in:** into. See note, I, ii, 2. — **gulf:** whirlpool. Cf. I, i, 93.

You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all 's in anger.

MENENIUS. Only fair speech.

COMINIUS. I think 't will serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.

VOLUMNIA. He must, and will:
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

CORIOLANUS. Must I go show them my unbarb'd sconce?
Must I with my base tongue give to my noble heart
A lie that it must bear well? I will do 't:
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Martius, they to dust should grind it,
And throw 't against the wind. To th' market-place!
You have put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to th' life.

COMINIUS. Come, come, we 'll prompt you.

VOLUMNIA. I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said

99. **unbarb'd** Ff | unbarbed Rowe. 101. **bear well?** Ff | bear? Well, Pope Globe Camb Delius. 102. **plot to lose,** Theobald | plot, to loose F_1F_2 | plot, to lose F_3F_4 | pelt to lose Hanmer.

99–100. The arrangement is that of the Folios, where line 100 is a typical Alexandrine. The Globe arrangement of this line is, "Must I with base tongue give my noble heart." — **unbarb'd sconce**: uncovered head. A 'barb' (corrupted from 'bard,' see Murray) was properly a protective covering for the breast and flanks of a war horse. 'Sconce' is a jocular term for 'head.' Both words are used here in a contemptuous sense.

101. **bear well?** I. The punctuation is that of the Folios; Pope's arrangement (see textual variants), followed in most editions, gives a more commonplace meaning.

102. **plot**: piece of earth, person. The ordinary interpretation of a puzzling expression. The punctuation of the Folios may be correct, and 'plot' be read in its ordinary sense, and the 'loose' of the First and Second Folios be interpreted in the old sense of 'break up.'

My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.
CORIOLANUS. Well, I must do 't:
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,
Which quier'd with my drum, into a pipe,
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lull asleep! the smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees,
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath receiv'd an alms! I will not do 't;
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.
VOLUMNIA. At thy choice then:
To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin: let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness; for I mock at death

113. **quier'd** Ff | quired Camb Globe. — **drum,** | drumme Ff.
115. **lull** Ff | lulls Rowe Globe.
119. **stirrup** | Stirrop Ff.

114. **eunuch**: eunuch's. — **virgin voice.** Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I, iv, 32–34: "thy small pipe Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound."
115. **lull**: lulls. For this 'confusion of proximity,' see Abbott, § 412.
119. **Who.** The antecedent is implied in 'my' (line 118).
123. **inherent**: clinging. The original (Latin) meaning.
125. **Than thou of them**: than for thee (to beg) of them.
126. **feel thy pride**: suffer all that thy pride can cause.
127. **stoutness**: obstinacy. As in V, vi, 27. Cf. 'stout heart,' III, ii, 78.

With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'st it from me:
But owe thy pride thyself.

CORIOLANUS. Pray, be content:
Mother, I am going to the market-place:
Chide me no more. I 'll mountebank their loves,
Cog their hearts from them, and come home belov'd
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going:
Commend me to my wife. I 'll return consul,
Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I' th' way of flattery further.

VOLUMNIA. Do your will. [*Exit*]

COMINIUS. Away! the tribunes do attend you: arm yourself
To answer mildly; for they are prepar'd
With accusations, as I hear, more strong
Than are upon you yet.

CORIOLANUS. The word is, 'mildly.' Pray you, let us go:
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honour.

MENENIUS. Ay, but mildly.

CORIOLANUS. Well, mildly be it then: mildly!
[*Exeunt*]

129. **suck'st** Ff | suck'dst Rowe.
130. **owe** F_1 | owne F_2 | own F_3F_4.
131. **I am** Ff | I 'm Pope.
137. [*Exit*] Exit Volumnia Ff.

129. "So Cassius in *Julius Cæsar*, IV, iii, 120, attributes his hasty temper to his mother. And the influence of the mother in the formation of the child's character is again referred to in *Macbeth*, I, vii, 72–74." — Clar.

130. **owe**: own. As in V, ii, 77; V, vi, 138. Often so.

133. **Cog**: "deceive, especially by smooth lies." — Schmidt.

138. **attend**: await. Cf. I, x, 30.

SCENE III. *The same. The Forum*

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS

BRUTUS. In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power: if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people;
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed. What, will he come?

Enter an Ædile

ÆDILE. He 's coming.
BRUTUS. How accompanied?
ÆDILE. With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favour'd him.
SICINIUS. Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procur'd
Set down by th' poll?
ÆDILE. I have: 't is ready.
SICINIUS. Have you collected them by tribes?
ÆDILE. I have.

SCENE III Capell | Scene VI Pope | Ff omit. — *The same. The Forum* | The Forum Pope | Ff omit.

9-10. **Of . . . poll** | one line in Ff.

11. **I have** F1 | I have: 't is ready F2F3F4.

3. **Enforce**: press, ply. Cf. line 21; II, iii, 214. Cf. 'force,' III, ii, 51. — **envy**: hatred, malice. Often so.

4. **on**: of. Cf. 'on 't,' I, i, 12. 'Of' and 'on' are frequently interchanged. See Abbott, §§ 175–182.

5. **What, will he come?** Addressed to the Ædile, whom he sees approaching.

10. **by th' poll.** Either 'singly,' or 'according to the register.'

11. **tribes.** Political divisions of the Roman people, originally three in number, finally increased to thirty-five.

SICINIUS. Assemble presently the people hither:
And when they hear me say, 'It shall be so,
I' th' right and strength o' th' commons,' be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say fine, cry 'Fine'; if death, cry 'Death,'
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' th' truth o' th' cause.

ÆDILE. I shall inform them.

BRUTUS. And when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confus'd
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.

ÆDILE. Very well.

SICINIUS. Make them be strong, and ready for this hint,
When we shall hap to give 't them.

BRUTUS. Go about it. [*Exit* ÆDILE]
Put him to choler straight: he hath been us'd

24. [*Exit* ÆDILE] Pope | Ff omit.

12. **presently**: immediately. Cf. II, iii, 248.

14. **either**. For the use of 'either' when more than two things are discriminated, cf. *Measure for Measure*, III, ii, 149.

14–18. **th' right and strength o' th' commons . . . the old prerogative And power**. "And first of all the Tribunes would in any case (whatsoever became of it) that the people should proceed to give their voices by Tribes, and not by hundreds: for by this means the multitude of the poor needy people (and all such rabble as had nothing to lose, and had less regard of honesty before their eyes) came to be of greater force (because their voices were numbered by the poll) than the noble honest citizens, whose persons and purse did dutifully serve the commonwealth in their wars." — Plutarch.

18. **i' th' truth o' th'**: according to justice, righteousness, of their case.

21. **Enforce**: press, demand. Cf. II, iii, 214. — **present**: immediate.

Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
Of contradiction. Being once chaf'd, he cannot
Be rein'd again to temperance; then he speaks
What 's in his heart; and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, *and* COMINIUS, *with* Senators *and* Patricians

SICINIUS. Well, here he comes.

MENENIUS. Calmly, I do beseech you.

CORIOLANUS. Ay, as an ostler, that for th' poorest piece
Will bear the knave by th' volume: th' honour'd gods
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among 's!
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!

1 SENATOR. Amen, amen.

MENENIUS. A noble wish.

Re-enter ÆDILE, *with* Citizens

SICINIUS. Draw near, ye people.

ÆDILE. List to your tribunes. Audience! peace, I say!

30. *Enter* CORIOLANUS . . . *with* Senators *and* Patricians Capell | Enter Coriolanus . . . with others Ff.

32. **ostler** Hanmer | hostler Ff.—**for th'** F_2 | fourth F_1 | for the F_3F_4.

35. **among 's!** Dyce | amongs F_1 | amongst you, $F_2F_3F_4$.

36. **Throng** Theobald | Through Ff.

39. *Re-enter* . . . Citizens | Enter the . . . the Plebeians Ff.

26. **worth**: full share. Coriolanus is accustomed to contradict rather than to give assent.

29–30. **and that . . . his neck**: and in his heart is that which promises, with our assistance, to break his neck.

32. **th' poorest piece**: the smallest piece of money.

33. **bear the knave**: will allow himself to be called knave.

CORIOLANUS. First, hear me speak.
BOTH TRIBUNES. Well, say. Peace, ho!
CORIOLANUS. Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?
Must all determine here?
SICINIUS. I do demand,
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers, and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults
As shall be prov'd upon you.
CORIOLANUS. I am content.
MENENIUS. Lo, citizens, he says he is content.
The warlike service he has done, consider; think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i' th' holy churchyard.
CORIOLANUS. Scratches with briers,
Scars to move laughter only.
MENENIUS. Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,
Rather than envy you.

47. you. $F_1F_2F_3$ | you? F_4. 55. accents Pope | Actions Ff.

43. **determine**: terminate, come to an end. So in V, iii, 120. — **demand**: ask. The common meaning in Shakespeare.

45. **Allow**: acknowledge. Cf. 'allowance,' III, ii, 57.

46. **censure**: judgment, sentence. See note, II, i, 22.

51. **Like graves i' th' holy churchyard.** Another of the touches that are more Elizabethan than Roman.

57. **envy**: intend ill will to. Cf. line 95. For the noun 'envy' see III, iii, 3.

COMINIUS. Well, well, no more.
CORIOLANUS. What is the matter,
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,
I am so dishonour'd that the very hour
You take it off again?
SICINIUS. Answer to us.
CORIOLANUS. Say, then: 't is true, I ought so.
SICINIUS. We charge you, that you have contriv'd to take
From Rome all season'd office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people.
CORIOLANUS. How? traitor?
MENENIUS. Nay, temperately: your promise.
CORIOLANUS. The fires i' th' lowest hell fold in the people
Call me their traitor? thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
'Thou liest' unto thee, with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.
SICINIUS. Mark you this, people?

68. hell fold in Pope | hell. Fould in F_1 | hell, Fould in $F_2F_3F_4$.

63. contriv'd: conspired, plotted. The usual meaning in Shakespeare. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, II, iii, 16.

64. all season'd office: all established order. As shown by Coriolanus's behavior in his candidacy for the consulship. Schmidt interprets 'season'd' as 'qualified' or 'tempered,' as opposed to 'power tyrannical' (line 65).

68. The fires . . . fold in: may the fires . . . envelop.

69. their traitor: traitor to them. — **injurious**: insulting, insolent.

70. sat: if there sat. Past subjunctive.

71. clutch'd: if there were clutched.

CITIZENS. To th' rock, to th' rock with him!
SICINIUS. Peace!
We need not put new matter to his charge:
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him; even this
So criminal, and in such capital kind,
Deserves th' extremest death.
BRUTUS. But since he hath
Serv'd well for Rome —
CORIOLANUS. What do you prate of service?
BRUTUS. I talk of that, that know it.
CORIOLANUS. You?
MENENIUS. Is this the promise that you made your mother?
COMINIUS. Know, I pray you —
CORIOLANUS. I 'll know no further:
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word,

75, 106, 119, 137, 142. CITIZENS] All Ff.
83. Rome — F_3F_4 | Rome. F_1F_2.
86. mother? $F_2F_3F_4$ | mother. F_1.
87. you — | you. Ff | you, yet to Seymour. — further F_1F_2 | farther F_3F_4.

81. **capital**: punishable by death. Cf. 'capital treason,' *King Lear*, V, iii, 83. The active sense of the word occurs in V, iii, 104.

83. **What**: why. Cf. *Cymbeline*, III, iv, 34: "What shall I need to draw my sword?"

84. **I talk of that, that know it**: I that know talk of it.

89. **pent**: being pent. One of the objects of 'pronounce.' Or it may mean 'were I pent.' Cf. 'clutch'd,' line 71.

or check my courage for what they can give,
To have 't with saying 'Good morrow.'

SICINIUS. For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power, as now at last,
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it; in the name o' th' people,
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city,
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates. I' th' people's name,
I say it shall be so.

CITIZENS. It shall be so, it shall be so: let him away:
He 's banish'd, and it shall be so.

COMINIUS. Hear me, my masters, and my common friends.

SICINIUS. He 's sentenc'd: no more hearing.

COMINIUS. Let me speak:
I have been consul, and can show for Rome
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
My country's good, with a respect more tender,
More holy and profound, than mine own life,

99. do F_3F_4 | doe F_2 | doth F_1. 110. for Theobald | from Ff.

92. **courage**. The word here seems to mean 'spirit' or 'resolution.' There is no reason why Coriolanus should here speak of his bravery, as the people have not made this a ground of complaint.

95. **Envied against**: shown his ill will toward. Cf. line 57.

97. **not**: not only. As in III, ii, 71.

104. **Rome gates**. Cf. 'Corioles walls,' I, viii, 8, and see note.

My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
And treasure of my loins; then if I would
Speak that —

SICINIUS. We know your drift. Speak what?

BRUTUS. There 's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
As enemy to the people, and his country.
It shall be so.

CITIZENS. It shall be so, it shall be so.

CORIOLANUS. You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air: I banish you,
And here remain with your uncertainty!
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts!
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders, till at length
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,
Still your own foes, deliver you, as most

116. that — Rowe | that. Ff. 130. but Ff | not Capell Globe.

114. **estimate**: reputation, worth. Cf. 'estimation.'

120. **cry**: pack. Cf. 'your cry,' IV, vi, 147.

130. **Making but reservation of yourselves.** Capell's substitution of 'not' for 'but here,' adopted by many modern editors, seems unnecessary. Coriolanus imprecates upon the plebeians that they may still retain the power of banishing their defenders, till their undiscerning folly, which can foresee no consequences, leave none in the city but themselves; so that, for want of those capable of conducting their defense, they may fall an easy prey to some nation who may conquer them without a struggle.

Abated captives, to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENENIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians. *They all shout and throw up their caps*]

ÆDILE. The people's enemy is gone, is gone!

CITIZENS. Our enemy is banish'd; he is gone! hoo! hoo!

SICINIUS. Go see him out at gates, and follow him,
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite;
Give him deserv'd vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.

CITIZENS. Come, come, let 's see him out at gates, come:
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! Come. [*Exeunt*]

133–134. **blows! Despising, For you, the city, thus** Capell | blowes, despising For you the City. Thus Ff.

135. [*Exeunt* . . . COMINIUS, MENENIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians . . .] Exeunt . . . Cominius, with Cumalijs F_1F_2 (Cominius, cum aliis F_3F_4).

137. **hoo! hoo!** | Hoo, hoo F_3F_4 | Hoo, oo F_1F_2.

143. **Come** Ff | Come, come Capell.

132. **Abated**: humiliated. The literal meaning of 'abate' is 'beat down' (Old French *abatre*), and it survives in the legal expression 'abate,' i.e. demolish (as a building).

136–137. "After declaration of the sentence, the people made such joy, as they never rejoiced more for any battle they had won upon their enemies, they were so brave and lively, and went home so jocundly from the assembly, for triumph of this sentence." — Plutarch.

ACT IV

SCENE I. *Rome. Before a gate of the city*

Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *with the young* Nobility *of Rome*

CORIOLANUS. Come, leave your tears; a brief farewell: the beast
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage? you were us'd
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That when the sea was calm, all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves
A noble cunning. You were us'd to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them.

VIRGILIA. O heavens! O heavens!

ACT IV. SCENE I | Actus Quartus Ff. — *Rome . . . city* Malone | Ff omit.

4. **extremity was** F_3F_4 | Extreamity was F_2 | Extreamities was F_1 | extremities were Malone.

5. **chances common** F_4 | chances, common F_2F_3 | chances. Common F_1.

8. **struck** F_4 | strooke F_1F_2 | strook F_3. — **gentle** Ff | gently Capell.

6–7. This metaphor is elaborated in *Troilus and Cressida*, I, iii, 33–45. Cf. *Sonnets*, LXXX. "Sea-metaphors would appeal specially to the Elizabethans." — Verity.

7–9. **fortune's . . . cunning**: when fortune's blows strike deepest, to be gentle under the wounds demands a noble wisdom. The subject of 'craves' shifts from 'blows' to 'being gentle.'

CORIOLANUS. Nay, I prithee, woman —
VOLUMNIA. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish!
CORIOLANUS. What, what, what!
I shall be lov'd when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you 'd have done, and sav'd
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,
Droop not, adieu: farewell, my wife, my mother,
I 'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,
I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardening spectacles. Tell these sad women,
'T is fond to wail inevitable strokes,
As 't is to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace, and
Believe 't not lightly (though I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen

12. **woman** — Rowe | woman. Ff. 24. **thee** F_3F_4 | the F_1F_2.

13. **red pestilence**. Cf. 'The red plague,' *The Tempest*, I, ii, 364; 'a red murrain,' *Troilus and Cressida*, II, i, 20. Medical writers of the time mention three varieties of the plague — red, yellow, and black.

23. **sometime**: former. The reference is to Cominius.

26. **fond**: foolish. This is the original meaning.

27. **wot**: know. So in IV, v, 164. The present tense of the anomalous verb 'wit' (Anglo-Saxon *witan*, 'to know'). The Bible (King James version) has the past tense 'wist.' Cf. *Exodus*, xvi, 15; *Mark*, ix, 6.

30–31. The reference may be to the Hydra, but more likely to the dragon of old romance that, like Grendel slain by Beowulf, inhabited

Makes fear'd, and talk'd of more than seen your son
Will or exceed the common, or be caught
With cautelous baits and practice.

VOLUMNIA. My first son,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile: determine on some course,
More than a wild exposture to each chance
That starts i' th' way before thee.

CORIOLANUS. O the gods!

COMINIUS. I 'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us,
And we of thee: so, if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
O'er the vast world to seek a single man,
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I' th' absence of the needer.

CORIOLANUS. Fare ye well:
Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
That 's yet unbruis'd: bring me but out at gate.
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch; when I am forth,

33. **My first son** Ff | First, my son Hanmer. Whether will thou F_1 | Whither will you $F_2F_3F_4$.
34. **Whither wilt thou** Capell | 43. **lose** F_3F_4 | loose F_1F_2.

a 'fen.' "Of the Indian dragons there are also said to be two kindes, one of them fenny and living in the Marishes . . . the other in the Mountains." — Topsell, *History of Serpents*.

33. **cautelous**: crafty. — **practice**: stratagem. — **first**: first-born.

36. **exposture**: exposure. Cf. 'composture' for 'composure,' *Timon of Athens*, IV, iii, 444.

49. **of noble touch**: of proved nobility. The metaphor from the touchstone for trying metals is common in Shakespeare.

Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you come:
While I remain above the ground, you shall
Hear from me still, and never of me aught
But what is like me formerly.

MENENIUS. That 's worthily
As any ear can hear. Come, let 's not weep.
If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods
I 'd with thee, every foot.

CORIOLANUS. Give me thy hand:
Come. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *The same. A street near the gate*

Enter the two Tribunes, SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS, *with the* Ædile

SICINIUS. Bid them all home; he 's gone, and we 'll no further.
The nobility are vexed, whom we see have sided
In his behalf.

BRUTUS. Now we have shown our power,
Let us seem humbler after it is done
Than when it was a-doing.

SICINIUS. Bid them home:
Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.

BRUTUS. Dismiss them home.
[*Exit* Ædile]
Here comes his mother.

52. **aught** Theobald | ought Ff.
SCENE II Pope. — *The same . . . gate* | Ff omit.
7. [*Exit* Ædile] Capell | Ff omit.

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* MENENIUS

SICINIUS. Let 's not meet her.

BRUTUS. Why?

SICINIUS. They say she 's mad.

BRUTUS. They have ta'en note of us: keep on your way.

VOLUMNIA. O, ye 're well met: the hoarded plague o' th' gods
Requite your love!

MENENIUS. Peace, peace! be not so loud.

VOLUMNIA. If that I could for weeping, you should hear —
Nay, and you shall hear some. [*To* BRUTUS] Will you be gone?

VIRGILIA. [*To* SICINIUS] You shall stay too: I would I had the power
To say so to my husband.

SICINIUS. Are you mankind?

VOLUMNIA. Ay, fool, is that a shame? Note but this, fool,

12. **Requite** F_3F_4 | requit F_1F_2.
14. [*To* BRUTUS] Johnson | [To Virgilia] Hanmer | Ff omit.
15-16. [*To* SICINIUS] Johnson | Ff omit. — **You . . . husband** | Hanmer continues to Volumnia.

11. **the hoarded plague o' th' gods.** Cf. *King Lear*, II, iv, 164–165: "All the stor'd vengeances of heaven, fall On her ungrateful top." In the earlier editions of Hudson's Shakespeare Lettsom's conjecture of 'plagues' for 'plague' was adopted.

16–18. "The word 'mankind' is used maliciously by the first speaker, and taken perversely by the second. A 'mankind' woman is a woman with the roughness of a man, and, in an aggravated sense, a woman ferocious, violent. . . . In this sense Sicinius asks Volumnia if she be 'mankind.' She takes 'mankind' for a 'human creature,' and accordingly cries out: 'Note but this, fool, Was not a man my father?'" — Johnson. In *The Winter's Tale*, II, iii, 67, Leontes, in anger, calls Paulina 'a mankind witch.'

Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
Than thou hast spoken words?

SICINIUS. O blessed heavens!

VOLUMNIA. Moe noble blows than ever thou wise words;
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what; yet go:
Nay, but thou shalt stay too: I would my son
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.

SICINIUS. What then?

VIRGILIA. What then?

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

VOLUMNIA. Bastards and all.
Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome!

MENENIUS. Come, come, peace!

SICINIUS. I would he had continued to his country
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.

BRUTUS. I would he had.

VOLUMNIA. 'I would he had'? 'T was you incens'd the rabble:
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which heaven
Will not have earth to know.

BRUTUS. Pray let's go.

VOLUMNIA. Now pray, sir, get you gone.
You have done a brave deed: ere you go, hear this:

19. **struck** F_4 | strooke F_1F_2| strook F_3.
20. **words?** Hanmer | words. Ff.
22. **good. I'll** Camb | good, Ile F_1 | good Ile F_2F_3 | good, I'le F_4.
36. **let's** Ff | let us Pope.

18. **foxship.** The fox was typical of ingratitude.

As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son
(This lady's husband here, this, do you see?)
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

BRUTUS. Well, well, we 'll leave you.

SICINIUS. Why stay we to be baited
With one that wants her wits?

[*Exeunt* Tribunes]

VOLUMNIA. Take my prayers with you.
I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to 't.

MENENIUS. You have told them home,
And, by my troth, you have cause: you 'll sup with me.

VOLUMNIA. Anger 's my meat: I sup upon myself,
And so shall starve with feeding: come, let 's go;
Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like: come, come, come.

[*Exeunt* VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA]

MENENIUS. Fie, fie, fie! [*Exit*]

43. **stay we** F_1 | stay you $F_2F_3F_4$.
44. **wits?** F_3F_4 | wits. F_1F_2.
49. **me.** F_1F_2 | me? F_3F_4.
52. **faint puling** | faint-puling Ff.
53. [*Exeunt* VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA] Exeunt Ff.

43–44. **baited With**: set on by (as a bear by dogs).

48. **lies heavy to 't.** Cf. Macbeth, V, iii, 44–45:

> Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart.

— **told them home.** Cf. II, ii, 100, and see note.

52. **faint puling**: weak whimpering. Addressed to Virgilia. "By this slight touch, and by the epithet 'faint,' how well is indicated the silent agony of weeping in which Virgilia is lost." — Cowden Clarke.

SCENE III. *A highway between Rome and Antium*

Enter a Roman *and a* Volsce, *meeting*

ROMAN. I know you well, sir, and you know me: your name, I think, is Adrian.

VOLSCE. It is so, sir: truly, I have forgot you.

ROMAN. I am a Roman, and my services are, as you are, against 'em. Know you me yet?

VOLSCE. Nicanor? no.

ROMAN. The same, sir.

VOLSCE. You had more beard when I last saw you, but your favour is well appear'd by your tongue. What 's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state, to find you out there. You have well saved me a day's journey.

SCENE III Pope | Scene II Rowe. — *A highway . . . Antium* Malone | Ff omit.
1. *Enter . . . meeting* | Enter . . . Ff.
6. **Nicanor?** F_3F_4 | Nicanor: F_1F_2.
9. **appear'd** Ff | approved Collier Globe | appeal'd Warburton.
10. **Rome?** F_3F_4 | Rome: F_1F_2.

SCENE III. Such a side scene as this not only marks time in the dramatic action; it circumstantializes the events. The homely personal touches give verisimilitude, as in the realism of De Foe. Compare similar scenes in *Macbeth*, II, iv; *Julius Cæsar*, II, iv; *Richard II*, III, iv. Such scenes are always original with Shakespeare; they have no parallel in his literary sources. "Shakespeare's wonderful judgment appears . . . in the introduction of some incident or other, though no way connected, yet serving to give an air of historic fact. Thus the scene . . . realizes the thing . . . gives an individuality, a liveliness and presence." — Coleridge.

9. **your favour . . . your tongue**: your countenance is testified to by your accent. Or, your identity is established by your voice. This transitive use of 'appear' is supported by *Cymbeline*, III, iv, 148, "That which, to appear itself, must not yet be." Cf. 'it appear itself,' *Much Ado About Nothing*, I, ii, 22. Murray gives no transitive use of 'appear.' Abbott, § 296, suggests that it may be used reflexively.

ROMAN. There hath been in Rome strange insurrections: the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

VOLSCE. Hath been? is it ended then? Our state thinks not so: they are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

ROMAN. The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again: for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people, and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

VOLSCE. Coriolanus banish'd?

ROMAN. Banish'd, sir.

VOLSCE. You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

ROMAN. The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she 's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

VOLSCE. He cannot choose: I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you. You have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

ROMAN. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

VOLSCE. A most royal one: the centurions and their

30. **will appear** $F_2F_3F_4$ | well appeare F_1.

12. **hath . . . insurrections.** For the singular verb preceding a plural subject, see Abbott, §§ 332–335. Cf. I, ix, 49.

charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

ROMAN. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

VOLSCE. You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

ROMAN. Well, let us go together. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV. *Antium. Before* AUFIDIUS'S *house*

Enter CORIOLANUS *in mean apparel, disguised and muffled*

CORIOLANUS. A goodly city is this Antium. City,
'T is I that made thy widows: many an heir
Of these fair edifices fore my wars
Have I heard groan and drop. Then know me not,
Lest that thy wives with spits, and boys with stones,
In puny battle slay me.

Enter a Citizen

Save you, sir.

SCENE IV Capell | Ff omit. — *Antium . . . house* Capell | Ff omit. 6. *Enter a* Citizen | In Ff after 'sir.'

39. **distinctly billeted**: assigned to their different quarters. — **in the entertainment**: engaged for active service, mobilized.

1. *Enter* CORIOLANUS . . . *muffled*. "For he disguised himself in such array and attire, as he thought no man could ever have known him for the person he was, seeing him in that apparel he had upon his back: and as Homer said of Ulysses: 'So did he enter into the enemies town.' It was even twilight when he entered the city of Antium, and many people met him in the streets, but no man knew him." — Plutarch.

CITIZEN. And you.

CORIOLANUS. Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies: is he in Antium?

CITIZEN. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state
At his house this night.

CORIOLANUS. Which is his house, beseech you? 10

CITIZEN. This, here before you.

CORIOLANUS. Thank you, sir, farewell.
[*Exit* Citizen]

O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin as 't were in love 15
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity: so fellest foes,
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
To take the one the other, by some chance, 20
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
And interjoin their issues. So with me:
My birth-place hate I, and my love 's upon
This enemy town. I 'll enter: if he slay me
He does fair justice; if he give me way, 25
I 'll do his country service. [*Exit*]

13. **seem to** F_4 | seemes to F_1 | seen F_2F_3. — **one** F_1F_4 | on F_2F_3.
15. **twin** F_1 | Twine $F_2F_3F_4$.
23. **hate** Capell | have Ff.

13–16. With this picture of friendship compare the early and more elaborated one in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, ii, 198–214.

17. **of a doit**: concerning a doit. Cf. I, v, 6.

21. **trick**: trifle. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV, iii, 66–67: "A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap."

SCENE V. *The same. A hall in* AUFIDIUS'S *house*

Music plays. Enter a Servingman

1 SERVINGMAN. Wine, wine, wine! what service is here? I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit*]

Enter a second Servingman

2 SERVINGMAN. Where 's Cotus? my master calls for him. Cotus! [*Exit*]

Enter CORIOLANUS

CORIOLANUS. A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I
Appear not like a guest.

Re-enter the first Servingman

1 SERVINGMAN. What would you have, friend? whence are you? Here 's no place for you: pray go to the door. [*Exit*]

CORIOLANUS. I have deserv'd no better entertainment,
In being Coriolanus.

Re-enter second Servingman

2 SERVINGMAN. Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? Pray, get you out.

SCENE V Capell | Scene II Rowe | Scene IV Pope | Ff omit. — *A . . . house* Rowe | Ff omit.
2. [*Exit*] Rowe | Ff omit.
3. *Enter a second . . .* | Enter another . . . Ff. — **master** F_4 | M. $F_1F_2F_8$.
5. **well** F_1 | $F_2F_3F_4$ omit.

3. **Cotus.** An unknown name, and not found in Plutarch.

10. In having gained that surname by capturing Corioles.

12. **companions**: fellows. 'Companion' means literally 'one who takes meals with another.'

CORIOLANUS. Away!

2 SERVINGMAN. 'Away!' get you away.

CORIOLANUS. Now thou 'rt troublesome.

2 SERVINGMAN. Are you so brave? I 'll have you talk'd with anon.

Enter a third Servingman. *The first meets him*

3 SERVINGMAN. What fellow 's this?

1 SERVINGMAN. A strange one as ever I look'd on: I cannot get him out o' th' house: prithee, call my master to him. [*Retires*]

3 SERVINGMAN. What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you avoid the house.

CORIOLANUS. Let me but stand; I will not hurt your hearth.

3 SERVINGMAN. What are you?

CORIOLANUS. A gentleman.

3 SERVINGMAN. A marvellous poor one.

CORIOLANUS. True, so I am.

3 SERVINGMAN. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station; here 's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.

CORIOLANUS. Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits. [*Pushes him away from him*]

21. [*Retires*] Camb | Ff omit.

23. **avoid**: get out of. Used intransitively in line 31.

24–25. "So he went directly to Tullus Aufidius house, and when he came thither, he got him up straight to the chimney-hearth, and sat him down, and spake not a word to any man, his face all muffled over." — Plutarch.

33. **batten**: feed. Literally 'grow fat like an animal.'

3 SERVINGMAN. What, you will not? Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here. 36

2 SERVINGMAN. And I shall. [*Exit*]

3 SERVINGMAN. Where dwell'st thou?

CORIOLANUS. Under the canopy.

3 SERVINGMAN. Under the canopy? 40

CORIOLANUS. Ay.

3 SERVINGMAN. Where 's that?

CORIOLANUS. I' th' city of kites and crows.

3 SERVINGMAN. I' th' city of kites and crows? What an ass it is! Then thou dwell'st with daws too? 45

CORIOLANUS. No, I serve not thy master.

3 SERVINGMAN. How, sir? do you meddle with my master?

CORIOLANUS. Ay; 't is an honester service than to meddle with thy mistress:

Thou prat'st, and prat'st; serve with thy trencher, hence! 50

[*Beats him away. Exit third* Servingman]

Enter AUFIDIUS *with the second* Servingman

AUFIDIUS. Where is this fellow?

2 SERVINGMAN. Here, sir: I 'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within. [*Retires*]

45. **it is!** Pope | it is, Ff.
50. [. . . *Exit third* Servingman] Ff omit.
51. *Enter . . . with the second . . .*] Enter . . . with the . . . Ff.
53. [*Retires*] Camb | Ff omit.

39. **the canopy**: the sky. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 311–312: "this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire."

51. *Enter* AUFIDIUS. "Whereupon they went to Tullus, who was at supper, to tell him of the strange disguising of this man. Tullus rose presently from the board, and coming towards him, asked him what he was, and wherefore he came." — Plutarch.

AUFIDIUS. Whence com'st thou? What wouldst thou?
Thy name? 54
Why speak'st not? speak, man; what 's thy name?
CORIOLANUS. [*Unmuffling*] If, Tullus,

54. thou F3F4 | ỹ F1F2. 55. [*Unmuffling*] Capell | Ff omit.

55–102. The following affords a most interesting example of Shakespeare's use of source-material. "Then Martius unmuffled himself, and after he had paused awhile, making no answer, he said unto him: If thou knowest me not yet, Tullus, and, seeing me, dost not perhaps believe me to be the man I am indeed, I must of necessity bewray myself to be that I am. I am Caius Martius, who hath done to thyself particularly, and to all the Volsces generally, great hurt and mischief, which I cannot deny for my surname of Coriolanus that I bear. For I never had other benefit nor recompence of the true and painful service I have done, and the extreme dangers I have been in, but this only surname: a good memory and witness of the malice and displeasure thou shouldest bear me. Indeed the name only remaineth with me: for the rest the envy and cruelty of the people of Rome have taken from me, by the sufferance of the dastardly nobility and magistrates, who have forsaken me, and let me be banished by the people. This extremity hath now driven me to come as a poor suitor, to take thy chimney-hearth, not of any hope I have to save my life thereby: for if I had feared death, I would not have come hither to have put myself in hazard: but pricked forward with desire to be revenged of them that thus have banished me; which now I do begin, in putting my person into the hands of their enemies. Wherefore, if thou hast any heart to be wrecked of the injuries thy enemies have done thee, speed thee now, and let my misery serve thy turn, and so use it as my service may be a benefit to the Volsces: promising thee, that I will fight with better good will for all you than I did when I was against you, knowing that they fight more valiantly who know the force of the enemy, than such as have never proved it. And if it be so that thou dare not, and that thou art weary to prove fortune any more, then am I also weary to live any longer. And it were no wisdom in thee, to save the life of him, who hath been heretofore thy mortal enemy, and whose service now can nothing help nor pleasure thee." — Plutarch.

Not yet thou know'st me, and seeing me, dost not
Think me for the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.

AUFIDIUS. What is thy name?

CORIOLANUS. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears
And harsh in sound to thine.

AUFIDIUS. Say, what 's thy name?
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in 't: though thy tackle 's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel: what 's thy name?

CORIOLANUS. Prepare thy brow to frown: know'st thou me yet?

AUFIDIUS. I know thee not: thy name?

CORIOLANUS. My name is Caius Martius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volsces
Great hurt and mischief: thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus. The painful service,
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname; a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me: only that name remains:
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest;
And suffer'd me by th' voice of slaves to be
Hoop'd out of Rome. Now, this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope

71. **requited** Rowe | requited: F_3F_4 | requitted: F_1F_2.

79. **Hoop'd** Ff Camb | Whoop'd Hanmer Delius Globe.

72. **memory**: memorial. The word is from Plutarch. Cf. V, i, 17.

(Mistake me not) to save my life; for if
I had fear'd death, of all the men i' th' world
I would have voided thee. But in mere spite
To be full quit of those my banishers,
Stand I before thee here: then, if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn: so use it,
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee. For I will fight
Against my canker'd country, with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou 'rt tir'd, then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice;
Which not to cut, would show thee but a fool,
Since I have ever followed thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.

AUFIDIUS. O Martius, Martius!
Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter

83. voided: avoided. 'Void' is a variant, not a contracted, form of 'avoid.'

84. full quit of: thoroughly revenged upon.

86. A heart of wreak: a revengeful heart.

87–88. particular: personal. — **maims Of shame**: disgraceful hurts (with the suggestion of losses of territory).

92. canker'd: infected, corrupted. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 137.

Should from yond cloud speak divine things,
And say 'T is true,' I 'd not believe them more
Than thee, all noble Martius. Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where against
My grained ash an hundred times hath broke,
And scarr'd the moon with splinters: here I clip
The anvil of my sword, and do contest
As hotly, and as nobly with thy love
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,
I lov'd the maid I married; never man
Sigh'd truer breath. But that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee,
We have a power on foot; and I had purpose
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
Or lose mine arm for 't: thou hast beat me out
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me:

110. **scarr'd** Ff | scar'd Rowe. — **clip** Pope | cleep Ff.
119. **Bestride** F_1 | Bestrid $F_2F_3F_4$.
122. **lose** F_3F_4 | loose F_1F_2.

110. **scarr'd . . . splinters.** This hyperbole Delius, in defense of the reading of the Folios, compares with *The Winter's Tale*, III, iii, 93: "the ship boring the moon with her main-mast." Malone, in defense of Rowe's 'scar'd,' quotes *Richard III*, V, iii, 341: "Amaze the welkin with your broken staves."

110–111. **clip the anvil of my sword**: embrace him who was struck by my sword as the anvil is by the hammer.

114. **Know thou first.** Daniel's conjecture that this should read 'Know, thou first!' i.e. 'thou foremost of men,' was adopted in previous editions of Hudson's Shakespeare.

122. **out**: out and out, thoroughly.

We have been down together in my sleep,
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
And wak'd half dead with nothing. Worthy Martius,
Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy, and pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'er-beat. O, come, go in,
And take our friendly senators by th' hands,
Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
Who am prepar'd against your territories,
Though not for Rome itself.

CORIOLANUS. You bless me, gods!

AUFIDIUS. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
The leading of thine own revenges, take
Th' one half of my commission, and set down
(As best thou art experienc'd, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness) thine own ways;
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in:
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!
And more a friend than e'er an enemy;
Yet, Martius, that was much. Your hand: most welcome!

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS. *The two* Servingmen *come forward*]

1 SERVINGMAN. Here 's a strange alteration!

128. **no** F_3F_4 | no other F_1F_2.
132. **-beat** Ff | -bear Rowe Globe.
144. **come** Ff | come, come Rowe.
148. [*Exeunt*...*forward*] Exeunt. Enter two of the Seruingmen Ff.
149. Scene V Pope.

2 SERVINGMAN. By my hand, I had thought to have strucken him with a cudgel; and yet my mind gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

1 SERVINGMAN. What an arm he has! he turn'd me about with his finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top.

2 SERVINGMAN. Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him. He had, sir, a kind of face, methought — I cannot tell how to term it.

1 SERVINGMAN. He had so; looking as it were — would I were hang'd, but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

2 SERVINGMAN. So did I, I'll be sworn: he is simply the rarest man i' th' world.

1 SERVINGMAN. I think he is: but a greater soldier than he, you wot one.

2 SERVINGMAN. Who, my master?

1 SERVINGMAN. Nay, it's no matter for that.

2 SERVINGMAN. Worth six on him.

1 SERVINGMAN. Nay, not so neither: but I take him to be the greater soldier.

2 SERVINGMAN. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that: for the defence of a town, our general is excellent.

1 SERVINGMAN. Ay, and for an assault too.

Re-enter third Servingman

3 SERVINGMAN. O slaves, I can tell you news; news, you rascals!

151. **strucken** F_3F_4 | stroken F_1F_2. 173. *Re-enter third* . . . | Enter the third . . . Ff.
164. **one** Ff | on Dyce.

164. **you wot one**: you know the one I mean.
166. **it's no matter for that**: never mind that (i.e. 'no names!').

1 AND 2 SERVINGMEN. What, what, what? let 's partake.

3 SERVINGMAN. I would not be a Roman of all nations; I had as lieve be a condemn'd man.

1 AND 2 SERVINGMEN. Wherefore? wherefore?

3 SERVINGMAN. Why, here 's he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Martius.

1 SERVINGMAN. Why do you say, 'thwack our general'?

3 SERVINGMAN. I do not say 'thwack our general,' but he was always good enough for him.

2 SERVINGMAN. Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

1 SERVINGMAN. He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on 't: before Corioles, he scotch'd him and notch'd him like a carbonado.

2 SERVINGMAN. And he had been cannibally given, he might have boil'd and eaten him too.

1 SERVINGMAN. But more of thy news?

3 SERVINGMAN. Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' th' table: no question ask'd him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him. Our general himself makes a mistress of him, sanctifies himself with 's hand, and turns up the white o' th' eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' th' middle, and but one half of what he

175, 178. 1 AND 2 SERVINGMEN | 2. 3. Capell | Both Ff.
177. lieve F_4 | liue F_1 | live F_2F_3.
187. on 't: before | on 't before Ff.
189. And Ff | An Capell.
190. boil'd | boyld Ff | broiled Pope Globe.
191. news? Capell | Newes. Ff.

187. **troth.** A variant form of 'truth.' — **scotch'd**: scored, gashed.

188. **carbonado**: "a piece of fish, flesh, or fowl, scored across and grilled or broiled upon the coals." — Murray.

196. **sanctifies . . . hand**: considers the touch of his hand as holy.

was yesterday; for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He 'll go, he says, and sowl the porter of Rome gates by th' ears: he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage poll'd. 202

2 SERVINGMAN. And he 's as like to do 't as any man I can imagine.

3 SERVINGMAN. Do 't? he will do 't; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he 's in directitude. 208

1 SERVINGMAN. Directitude! what 's that?

3 SERVINGMAN. But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him. 212

1 SERVINGMAN. But when goes this forward?

3 SERVINGMAN. To-morrow; to-day; presently: you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 't is, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips. 217

2 SERVINGMAN. Why, then we shall have a stirring world again: this peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers. 220

1 SERVINGMAN. Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace

200. **sowl** | sowle Rowe | sole Ff.
202. **poll'd** Rowe | poul'd Ff.
215. **struck** F_4 | strooke F_1F_2 | strook F_3.

200. **sowl**: pull (generally with the qualification 'by the ears').

202. **poll'd**: stripped, bare. Cf. 'poll and pill,' meaning 'plunder and strip.' 'Poll' means originally 'cut,' 'shear' (especially the hair).

209. **Directitude**. A humorous blunder for some word meaning 'discredit.' Similar malapropisms are in Dogberry's speeches in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

211. **in blood**: in good condition. Cf. 'worst in blood,' I, i, 154.

as far as day does night: it 's sprightly, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy, mull'd, deaf, sleepy, insensible. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

3 SERVINGMAN. Reason, because they then less need one another: the wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising. 227

1 AND 2 SERVINGMEN. In, in, in, in! [*Exeunt*]

SCENE VI. *Rome. A public place*

Enter the two tribunes SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS

SICINIUS. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;
His remedies are tame: the present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry, here do make his friends
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had, 5
Though they themselves did suffer by 't, behold
Dissentious numbers pest'ring streets than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going
About their functions friendly. 9

222. **sprightly, waking** Pope | sprightly walking Ff.
224. **sleepy** F_3F_4 | sleepe F_1F_2.
228. 1 AND . . . | Both Ff.
SCENE VI Pope | Scene IV Rowe.
— *Rome . . . place* | Ff omit.
2. **tame: the** | tame, the Ff | tame i' the Theobald Camb.
4. **hurry, here do** Hanmer | hurry. Heere do we Ff.

222. **audible**: able to hear, alert. See note, I, iii, 2.

223. **vent**: "the scenting of the game." — Baynes. This makes the much-disputed phrase equivalent to 'excitement of the chase,' and carries on the metaphor suggested by 'in blood' (line 211). 'Vent' (French, from Latin *ventus*, 'wind') is thus equivalent to 'wind,' meaning 'scent.' Wright thinks that 'vent' has reference to effervescent wine, 'working ready to burst the cask,' as contrasted with 'mull'd.' — **mull'd**: insipid, lifeless (like sweetened wine).

Enter MENENIUS

BRUTUS. We stood to 't in good time. Is this Menenius?
SICINIUS. 'T is he, 't is he: O, he is grown most kind of late:
Hail, sir!
MENENIUS. Hail to you both!
SICINIUS. Your Coriolanus
Is not much miss'd, but with his friends:
The commonwealth doth stand, and so would do,
Were he more angry at it.
MENENIUS. All 's well; and might have been much better, if
He could have temporiz'd.
SICINIUS. Where is he, hear you?
MENENIUS. Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four Citizens

CITIZENS. The gods preserve you both!
SICINIUS. God-den, our neighbours.
BRUTUS. God-den to you all, god-den to you all.
1 CITIZEN. Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,
Are bound to pray for you both.
SICINIUS. Live, and thrive!

12. Hail, sir! Ff Camb Delius | *Both Tri.* Hail, sir! Globe.
12-17. Your Coriolanus . . . have temporiz'd | Prose in Ff.
20, 25. CITIZENS | All Ff.
20, 21. God-den | Gooden $F_1F_2F_3$ | Good-e'en F_4.
20. our F_1F_2 | F_3F_4 omit.

20, 21. God-den: good even. Cf. 'God ye good even,' *As You Like It*, V, i, 16. In *Romeo and Juliet*, I, ii, 58, Quartos and Folios print 'Godgigoden' for 'God give you good even.'

BRUTUS. Farewell, kind neighbours: we wish'd Coriolanus
Had lov'd you as we did.

CITIZENS. Now the gods keep you!

BOTH TRIBUNES. Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt* Citizens]

SICINIUS. This is a happier and more comely time
Than when these fellows ran about the streets,
Crying confusion.

BRUTUS. Caius Martius was
A worthy officer i' th' war; but insolent,
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving —

SICINIUS. And affecting one sole throne,
Without assistance.

MENENIUS. I think not so.

SICINIUS. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

BRUTUS. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an Ædile

ÆDILE. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports the Volsces with two several powers
Are ent'red in the Roman territories,
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before 'em.

MENENIUS. 'T is Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Martius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world,

32. **Self-loving** — Capell | Self-loving. Ff.

34. **should** Ff | had Pope. — **lamentation** | Lamention F1.

Which were inshell'd when Martius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.

SICINIUS. Come, what talk you
Of Martius?

BRUTUS. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.

MENENIUS. Cannot be?
We have record that very well it can,
And three examples of the like hath been
Within my age. But reason with the fellow
Before you punish him, where he heard this,
Lest you shall chance to whip your information,
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.

SICINIUS. Tell not me:
I know this cannot be.

BRUTUS. Not possible.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER. The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the senate-house: some news is coming
That turns their countenances.

SICINIUS. 'T is this slave
(Go whip him fore the people's eyes) his raising;
Nothing but his report.

MESSENGER. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is deliver'd.

SICINIUS. What more fearful?

47. **whipp'd. It** | whipt, it Ff.
50. **hath** $F_1F_2F_3$ | have F_4.
58. **coming** F_4 | comming $F_1F_2F_3$ | come Rowe Delius Camb.

MESSENGER. It is spoke freely out of many mouths
(How probable I do not know) that Martius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,
And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.
SICINIUS. This is most likely!
BRUTUS. Rais'd only, that the weaker sort may wish
Good Martius home again.
SICINIUS. The very trick on 't.
MENENIUS. This is unlikely:
He and Aufidius can no more atone
Than violent'st contrariety.

Enter a second Messenger

2 MESSENGER. You are sent for to the senate:
A fearful army, led by Caius Martius
Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories, and have already
O'erborne their way, consum'd with fire, and took
What lay before them.

Enter COMINIUS

COMINIUS. O, you have made good work!
MENENIUS. What news? What news?
COMINIUS. You have holp to ravish your own daughters, and

73. **violent'st** Ff | violentest Pope. Ff. — 2 MESSENGER | 2 Mes. Hanmer | Mes. Ff.
74. *Enter a second* . . . | Enter . . .

67–68. **as spacious . . . thing.** Either 'so comprehensive as to include all, from the youngest to the oldest,' or 'as infinite in its extent as from the beginning of time until to-day.'

72. **atone**: be at one, agree. The etymological idea.

To melt the city leads upon your pates;
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses —
MENENIUS. What 's the news? What 's the news?
COMINIUS. Your temples burned in their cement, and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confin'd
Into an auger's bore.
MENENIUS. Pray now, your news?
You have made fair work, I fear me: pray, your news?
If Martius should be join'd with Volscians —
COMINIUS. If?
He is their god: he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him,
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.
MENENIUS. You have made good work,
You and your apron-men; you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and
The breath of garlic-eaters.
COMINIUS. He 'll shake your Rome about your ears.
MENENIUS. As Hercules
Did shake down mellow fruit: you have made fair work!

83. **noses**— Capell | Noses. Ff. | Augors boare F_1F_2 | augors boar F_3.
87. **auger's bore** | augers bore F_4 87, 88. **news?** F_3F_4 | Newes, F_1F_2.

97. **voice of occupation**: vote of the workingmen.

98. **breath of garlic-eaters**. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV, ii, 42–44: "And, most dear actors, eat no onions, nor garlic; for we are to utter sweet breath."

99–100. **As Hercules . . . fruit**. One of the labours of Hercules was to get the golden apples of the Hesperides. — **you have made fair work**. Ironically contrasted with the success of Hercules.

BRUTUS. But is this true, sir?
COMINIUS. Ay, and you 'll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt; and who resists
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,
And perish constant fools: who is 't can blame him?
Your enemies and his find something in him.
MENENIUS. We are all undone, unless
The noble man have mercy.
COMINIUS. Who shall ask it?
The tribunes cannot do 't for shame; the people
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they
Should say 'Be good to Rome,' they charg'd him even
As those should do that had deserv'd his hate,
And therein show'd like enemies.
MENENIUS. 'T is true:
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face
To say 'Beseech you, cease.' You have made fair hands,
You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!
COMINIUS. You have brought
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never
So incapable of help.
BOTH TRIBUNES. Say not, we brought it.
MENENIUS. How? Was 't we? we lov'd him, but, like beasts

103. **resists** Ff | resist Hanmer Camb Delius Globe. 120. **So incapable** | S'incapable Ff. — BOTH TRIBUNES Dyce | Tri. Ff.

112. **they charg'd**: they would charge (i.e. implore).
117. **fair hands**: a pretty piece of work, fine business.

And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' th' city.

COMINIUS. But I fear
They 'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points
As if he were his officer: desperation
Is all the policy, strength, and defence,
That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens

MENENIUS. Here come the clusters.
And is Aufidius with him? You are they
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at
Coriolanus' exile. Now he 's coming;
And not a hair upon a soldier's head
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
And pay you for your voices. 'T is no matter;
If he could burn us all into one coal,
We have deserv'd it.

CITIZENS. Faith, we hear fearful news.

1 CITIZEN. For mine own part,
When I said, banish him, I said, 't was pity.

2 CITIZEN. And so did I.

3 CITIZEN. And so did I; and, to say the truth, so did very many of us: that we did, we did for the best; and

128. Scene VII Pope. 139. CITIZENS | Omnes Ff.

125. **second name**: next in renown. — **points**. Cf. *The Tempest*, I, ii, 498–499: "but then exactly do All points of my command."

though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.

COMINIUS. Ye 're goodly things, you voices!

MENENIUS. You have made
Good work, you and your cry! Shall 's to the Capitol?

COMINIUS. O, ay, what else?

[*Exeunt* COMINIUS *and* MENENIUS]

SICINIUS. Go, masters, get you home; be not dismay'd:
These are a side that would be glad to have
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no sign of fear.

1 CITIZEN. The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let 's home. I ever said we were i' th' wrong when we banish'd him.

2 CITIZEN. So did we all. But, come, let 's home.

[*Exeunt* Citizens]

BRUTUS. I do not like this news.

SICINIUS. Nor I.

BRUTUS. Let 's to the Capitol: would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie!

SICINIUS. Pray, let 's go. [*Exeunt*]

146. **made** F_1 | made you $F_2F_3F_4$. 156. [*Exeunt* . . .] Exit Cit. Ff.
148. [*Exeunt* . . .] Exeunt both Ff. 160. [*Exeunt*] Exeunt Tribunes Ff.

147. **cry**: pack of hounds. Cf. 'cry of curs,' III, iii, 120.

153–156. "His chiefest purpose was to increase still the malice and dissension between the nobility and the commonalty . . . This made greater stir and broil between the nobility and the people than was before. For the noblemen fell out with the people because they had so unjustly banished a man of so great valour and power. . . . Then fell there out a marvellous sudden change of mind among the people, and far more strange and contrary in the nobility. For the people thought it good to repeal the condemnation and exile of Martius." — Plutarch.

SCENE VII. *A camp, at a small distance from Rome*

Enter AUFIDIUS *with his* Lieutenant

AUFIDIUS. Do they still fly to th' Roman?

LIEUTENANT. I do not know what witchcraft 's in him, but
Your soldiers use him as the grace fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;
And you are dark'ned in this action, sir,
Even by your own.

AUFIDIUS. I cannot help it now,
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
Even to my person, than I thought he would
When first I did embrace him: yet his nature
In that 's no changeling, and I must excuse
What cannot be amended.

LIEUTENANT. Yet I wish, sir,
(I mean for your particular) you had not
Join'd in commission with him; but either

SCENE VII Capell | Scene V Rowe | Scene VIII Pope. — *A camp* . . . *Rome* Theobald | Ff omit. 8. **proudlier** F1 | proudly F2F3F4.

1–6. "The other Volsces that were appointed to remain in garrison for defence of their country, hearing this good news, would tarry no longer at home, but armed themselves and ran to Martius' camp, saying they did acknowledge no other captain but him. Hereupon his fame ran through all Italy, and every one praised him for a valiant captain." — Plutarch.

6. **your own**: your own soldiers.

13. **for your particular**: so far as you personally are concerned.

14. "Thus he was joined in commission with Tullus as general of the Volsces, having absolute authority between them to follow and pursue the wars." — Plutarch.

Have borne the action of yourself, or else
To him had left it solely.

AUFIDIUS. I understand thee well; and be thou sure,
When he shall come to his account, he knows not
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
To th' vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
As draw his sword, yet he hath left undone
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,
Whene'er we come to our account.

LIEUTENANT. Sir, I beseech you, think you he 'll carry Rome?

AUFIDIUS. All places yield to him ere he sits down,
And the nobility of Rome are his:
The senators and patricians love him too:
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty
To expel him thence. I think he 'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. First, he was
A noble servant to them; but he could not

15. **Have** Ff | Had Malone.
19. **him. Although** Capell | him, although Ff | him; though Pope.
28. **yield** $F_2F_3F_4$ | yeelds F_1.
30. **senators** $F_1F_3F_4$ | senator F_2.
34. **osprey** Theobald | Aspray Ff.

34. The osprey was supposed to fascinate fish, making them turn on their backs and yield themselves an unresisting prey. Cf. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, I, i, 138–140:

> Your [Jove's] actions
> Soon as they move, as ospreys do the fish,
> Subdue before they touch.

Carry his honours even: whether 't was pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man; whether defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving
From th' casque to th' cushion, but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb,
As he controll'd the war. But one of these,
(As he hath spices of them all, not all,
For I dare so far free him) made him fear'd,
So hated, and so banish'd: but he has a merit
To choke it in the utt'rance. So our virtues

37. **'t was** F_3F_4 | 'was F_1F_2. 49. **To choke** | Tho' chokes Hanmer. — **virtues** $F_2F_3F_4$ | Vertue, F_1.
39. **defect** $F_2F_3F_4$ | detect F_1.

37–45. **pride . . . war.** "Aufidius assigns three probable reasons for the miscarriage of Coriolanus; pride, which easily follows an uninterrupted train of success; unskilfulness to regulate the consequences of his own victories: a stubborn uniformity of nature, which could not make the proper transition from the 'casque' or 'helmet' to the 'cushion' or 'chair of civil authority'; but acted with the same despotism in peace as in war." — Johnson.

39. **happy**: lucky, fortunate. Cf. Latin *felix*.

46. He savors of all but not in their full strength.

48–49. **but he . . . utt'rance**: but he is able to choke it (his banishment) while it is being proclaimed. This is added parenthetically, and is aside from the main thought. The following 'so' refers to what precedes the parenthesis.

49–53. **So . . . done**: thus our virtues depend on how we are estimated by our contemporaries, and power most commendable in itself finds no path to ruin so inevitable as that of a place of authority which extols its deeds. That is, let a man like Coriolanus, with his habits of military prerogative, be once advanced to a place of civil authority, and the very seat which rewards and blazons his exploits

Lie in th' interpretation of the time;
And power, unto itself most commendable,
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
T' extol what it hath done.
One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;
Rights by rights fouler, strengths by strengths do fail.
Come, let 's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine.

[*Exeunt*]

55. **fouler** Ff | falter Dyce Globe | founder Malone.

is sure to prove his destruction.

52. **evident**: certain, inevitable. — **chair**: *sella curulis*, the official seat of the higher magistrates.

54. **One fire drives out one fire**: heat expels heat. An allusion to the old idea of curing a burn by applying heat.

55. Probably the sense of 'fail' is anticipated in the first clause and that of 'fouler' continued over the second, and the meaning will be that the better rights succumb to the worse and the nobler strengths to the meaner. See textual variants for attempts at emendation.

ACT V

SCENE I. *Rome. A public place*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS, *the two* Tribunes, *with others*

MENENIUS. No, I 'll not go: you hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general, who lov'd him
In a most dear particular. He call'd me father:
But what o' that? Go, you that banish'd him;
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee
The way into his mercy: nay, if he coy'd
To hear Cominius speak, I 'll keep at home.
COMINIUS. He would not seem to know me.
MENENIUS. Do you hear?
COMINIUS. Yet one time he did call me by my name:
I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. Coriolanus
He would not answer to: forbad all names;
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,

ACT V. SCENE I | Actus Quintus Ff. — *Rome . . . place* | Ff omit. 5. **knee** F_1 | kneele F_2 | kneel F_3F_4. 12. **to** $F_2F_3F_4$ | too F_1.

3. **In a most dear particular**: with close personal affection.

5. **knee**: make your way upon your knees.

6. **coy'd**: disdained. The verb 'coy' meant originally 'render quiet,' 'calm'; then 'stroke soothingly,' 'caress' (as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV, i, 2); then 'affect reserve toward,' 'have an aversion for.'

Till he had forg'd himself a name o' th' fire
Of burning Rome.

MENENIUS. Why, so: you have made good work:
A pair of tribunes, that have rack'd for Rome,
To make coals cheap: a noble memory!

COMINIUS. I minded him how royal 't was to pardon
When it was less expected. He replied,
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punish'd.

MENENIUS. Very well;
Could he say less?

COMINIUS. I offered to awaken his regard
For 's private friends: his answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff: he said, 't was folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt
And still to nose th' offence.

MENENIUS. For one poor grain or two?
I am one of those: his mother, wife, his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains:
You are the musty chaff, and you are smelt
Above the moon. We must be burnt for you.

SICINIUS. Nay, pray, be patient: if you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid 's with our distress. But sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.

16. rack'd for Pope | wrack'd for Ff | wreck'd fair Dyce.

16–17. **rack'd . . . cheap.** Who will want coals when the city is burning (line 14)? — **memory.** As in IV, v, 72.

MENENIUS. No, I 'll not meddle.
SICINIUS. Pray you go to him.
MENENIUS. What should I do?
BRUTUS. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Martius.
MENENIUS. Well, and say that Martius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
Unheard; what then?
But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
With his unkindness? say 't be so?
SICINIUS. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you intended well.
MENENIUS. I 'll undertake 't:
I think he 'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
He was not taken well; he had not din'd:
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts: therefore I 'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request,
And then I 'll set upon him.
BRUTUS. You know the very road into his kindness,
And cannot lose your way.
MENENIUS. Good faith, I 'll prove him,

47. As: which. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, I, ii, 33. See Abbott, § 280.

50. taken well: approached opportunely. This speech is appropriate in a speaker who is confessedly convivial. Cf. II, i, 45–47.

Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success. [*Exit*]

COMINIUS. He 'll never hear him.

SICINIUS. Not?

COMINIUS. I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye
Red as 't would burn Rome; and his injury
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him;
'T was very faintly he said 'Rise': dismiss'd me
Thus, with his speechless hand. What he would do,
He sent in writing after me: what he would not,
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions:
So that all hope is vain,
Unless his noble mother, and his wife,
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country: therefore let 's hence,
And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt*]

61. **Speed**: fare. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 115.

63. **sit in gold**. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III, vi, 4–5: "Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold Were publicly enthron'd." "The ambassadors that were sent were Martius' familiar friends and acquaintance, who looked at the least for a courteous welcome of him, as of their familiar friend and kinsman. Howbeit they found nothing less, for at their coming they were brought through the camp to the place where he was set in his chair of state, with a marvellous and an unspeakable majesty, having the chiefest men of the Volsces about him." — Plutarch.

64–65. **his . . . pity**: the wrong done him locked up his pity.

67–69. **What . . . conditions**: what he would grant was stated in the written terms for surrender; in the other points he bound the Romans to yield to his conditions. 'What he would not' is grammatically the object of 'bound.'

SCENE II. *Entrance to the Volscian camp before Rome*

Two Watch *on guard*

Enter to them, MENENIUS

1 WATCH. Stay: whence are you?

2 WATCH. Stand, and go back.

MENENIUS. You guard like men; 't is well. But by your leave,
I am an officer of state, and come
To speak with Coriolanus.

1 WATCH. From whence?

MENENIUS. From Rome.

1 WATCH. You may not pass, you must return: our general
Will no more hear from thence.

2 WATCH. You 'll see your Rome embrac'd with fire, before
You 'll speak with Coriolanus.

MENENIUS. Good my friends,
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks
My name hath touch'd your ears: it is Menenius.

1 WATCH. Be it so; go back: the virtue of your name
Is not here passable.

SCENE II Rowe. — *Entrance* . . . *Rome* Camb | Ff omit. — *Two* . . . MENENIUS | Enter Menenius to the Watch or Guard Ff.

1. 1 WATCH (and elsewhere) | 1 Wat. Ff | First Sen. (Sentinel) Camb.

2. 2 WATCH (and elsewhere) | 2 Wat. Ff | Sec. Sen. Camb.

4 **From whence?** | Whence? Pope.

8. **Good my friends**: my good friends. See Abbott, § 13.

10. **lots to blanks**: "a thousand to one." — Murray. A 'lot' is a prize; a 'blank' is nothing.

MENENIUS. I tell thee, fellow,
Thy general is my lover: I have been
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified;
For I have ever verified my friends
(Of whom he 's chief) with all the size that verity
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground
I have tumbled past the throw, and in his praise
Have almost stamp'd the leasing. Therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.

1 WATCH. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here: no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore go back.

MENENIUS. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general.

2 WATCH. Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say you cannot pass. Therefore go back.

MENENIUS. Has he din'd, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

1 WATCH. You are a Roman, are you?

16. **haply** Hanmer | happely F_1F_2 | happily F_3F_4.

17. **verified**: stood up for, supported. Cf. *King John*, II, i, 277.

20. **subtle**: deceptive, treacherously smooth. Steevens quotes Ben Jonson's *Chloridia*: "Upon Tityus' breast . . . counted the subtlest bowling-ground in all Tartarus."

21. **tumbled past the throw**: overshot the mark.

22. **stamp'd the leasing**: given currency to untruth.

29. **factionary on**: taking your stand on the side of.

MENENIUS. I am, as thy general is.

1 WATCH. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have push'd out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decay'd dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceiv'd: therefore back to Rome, and prepare for your execution: you are condemn'd, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

MENENIUS. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

1 WATCH. Come, my captain knows you not.

MENENIUS. I mean, thy general.

1 WATCH. My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood. Back, that 's the utmost of your having; back!

MENENIUS. Nay, but, fellow, fellow —

Enter CORIOLANUS *with* AUFIDIUS

CORIOLANUS. What 's the matter?

MENENIUS. Now, you companion, I 'll say an errand for you: you shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall

42. **dotant** $F_1F_2F_3$ | dotard F_4.
48. **thy** F_1 | the $F_2F_3F_4$.
57. **errand** Pope | arrant $F_1F_2F_3$ | errant F_4.

41. **palms**: hands held up in supplication.

42. **dotant**. A present participle, and therefore active, 'one who dotes' (not a 'dotard'). Cf. 'mendicant,' 'one who begs.'

57. **companion**: fellow. Used depreciatingly. See note, IV, v, 12.

perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus: guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou stand'st not i' th' state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swoon for what 's to come upon thee. [*To* CORIOLANUS] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son! thou art preparing fire for us; look thee, here 's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee: but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here, this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

CORIOLANUS. Away!

MENENIUS. How? away?

CORIOLANUS. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others: though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison rather

64. [*To* CORIOLANUS] Ff omit.

59. **guardant**: guarding, on guard. A term of heraldry. The expression suggests 'Jack in office.'

69. **your**. The Fourth Folio 'our' is adopted by some editors.

77. **servanted**. Cf. 'fielded,' I, iv, 12, and see note.

77–78. **owe My revenge properly**: possess revenge as my right.

78–79. **my remission . . . breasts**: any remission that I may make depends on the will of the Volscians.

79–81. **That . . . much**: oblivious ingratitude shall kill our old friendship rather than pity shall give any sign how strong it was.

Than pity note how much. Therefore be gone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake, [*Gives a letter*]
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,
Was my belov'd in Rome: yet thou behold'st.

AUFIDIUS. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS]

1 WATCH. Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

2 WATCH. 'T is a spell, you see, of much power: you know the way home again.

1 WATCH. Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back?

2 WATCH. What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

MENENIUS. I neither care for th' world, nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there 's any, ye 're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another: let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away! [*Exit*]

1 WATCH. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

2 WATCH. The worthy fellow is our general. He 's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt*]

81. **pity note** Theobald | pitty: Note Ff.
84. [*Gives . . .*] Pope | Ff omit.
88. [*Exeunt . . .*] Capell | Exeunt. Manent (Manet F1) the Guard and Menenius Ff.
90-91. Verse in Ff.
103. [*Exeunt*] Exit Watch Ff.

92. **shent**: rebuked. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 416; *Twelfth Night*, IV, ii, 112.

97. **slight**: insignificant. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, IV, iii, 37. — **by himself**: by his own hands.

SCENE III. *The tent of* CORIOLANUS

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, *and others*

CORIOLANUS. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow
Set down our host. My partner in this action,
You must report to th' Volscian lords, how plainly
I have borne this business.

AUFIDIUS. Only their ends
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against
The general suit of Rome; never admitted
A private whisper, no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

CORIOLANUS. This last old man,
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,
Lov'd me above the measure of a father,
Nay, godded me indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him; for whose old love I have,
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd
The first conditions, which they did refuse
And cannot now accept; to grace him only
That thought he could do more, a very little
I have yielded to. Fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to. Ha! what shout is this? [*Shout within*]

SCENE III Pope. — *The* ... CORIOLANUS Camb | Ff omit.
1. *Enter* ... *others* Capell | Enter Coriolanus and Auffidius (Aufidius F4) Ff.
4. **I have** Ff | I've Pope.

3. plainly: openly, frankly, without artifice. Cf. *Richard III*, I, i, 118.

8–9. old man ... crack'd heart. Cf. *King Lear*, II, i, 92: "O madam, my old heart is crack'd, it 's crack'd."

11. godded: idolized. Used by Shakespeare nowhere else.

Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
In the same time 't is made? I will not.

Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, *leading young* MARTIUS, VALERIA, *and* Attendants

My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould
Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood. But out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.
What is that curtsy worth? Or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am not
Of stronger earth than others: my mother bows,
As if Olympus to a molehill should

22. *Enter*... Attendants Malone | Enter Virgilia, Volumnia, Valeria, yong Martius, with Attendants Ff.
25. **nature**, Capell | Nature Ff.
27. **doves'** Steevens | doves Ff | dove's Rowe.

20–37. "Her answer ended, she took her daughter-in-law and Martius' children with her, and being accompanied with all the other Roman ladies, they went in troup together unto the Volsces' camp: whom when they saw, they of themselves did both pity and reverence her, and there was not a man among them that once durst say a word unto her. Now was Martius set then in his chair of state, with all the honours of a general, and when he had spied the women coming afar off, he marvelled what the matter meant: but afterwards knowing his wife which came foremost, he determined at the first to persist in his obstinate and inflexible rancour. But overcome in the end with natural affection, and being altogether altered to see them, his heart would not serve him to tarry their coming to his chair, but coming down in haste he went to meet them, and first he kissed his mother, and embraced her a pretty while, then his wife and little children." — Plutarch.

30. **Olympus**. A mountain in Thessaly, on which dwelt the gods of Greek mythology. Cf. line 46 and IV, ii, 53, where Volumnia likens herself to Juno.

In supplication nod: and my young boy
Hath an aspect of intercession, which
Great nature cries 'Deny not.' Let the Volsces
Plough Rome, and harrow Italy: I 'll never
Be such a gosling to obey instinct; but stand
As if a man were author of himself,
And knew no other kin.

VIRGILIA. My lord and husband!

CORIOLANUS. These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

VIRGILIA. The sorrow that delivers us thus chang'd,
Makes you think so.

CORIOLANUS. Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say
For that, 'Forgive our Romans.' O, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods! I prate
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted: sink, my knee, i' th' earth; [*Kneels*]
Of thy deep duty more impression show
Than that of common sons.

48. **prate** Pope Camb Delius | pray Ff.

41. **am out**: have forgotten my part. Cf. *Sonnets*, XXIII, 1–2:

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put beside his part.

46. **jealous queen of heaven.** Juno was the guardian of marriage and the avenger of infidelity.

VOLUMNIA. O, stand up blest!
Whilst with no softer cushion than the flint
I kneel before thee; and unproperly
Show duty, as mistaken all this while
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels*]
CORIOLANUS. What 's this?
Your knees to me? to your corrected son?
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun,
Murd'ring impossibility, to make
What cannot be, slight work.
VOLUMNIA. Thou art my warrior;
I holp to frame thee. Do you know this lady?
CORIOLANUS. The noble sister of Publicola;
The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle
That 's curdied by the frost from purest snow
And hangs on Dian's temple. Dear Valeria!

56. [*Kneels*] Rowe | Ff omit.
58. **pebbles** F_4 | Pibbles $F_1F_2F_3$.
63. **holp** Pope | hope Ff.
66. **curdied** Ff | curdled Rowe.

58–59. pebbles . . . Fillip the stars. Cf. *The Tempest*, I, ii, 4–5: "But that the sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek, Dashes the fire out." — **hungry.** An epithet of the sea. Cf. *Sonnets*, LXIV, 5–6:

> When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
> Advantage on the kingdom of the shore.

64. "Valeria, Publicola's own sister; the self-same Publicola, who did such notable service to the Romans. . . . His sister Valeria was greatly honoured and reverenced among all the Romans: and did so modestly and wisely behave herself, that she did not shame nor dishonour the house she came of." — Plutarch, *Life of Publicola*.

65–67. moon . . . chaste . . . Dian's. Diana, the virgin goddess of the moon, is the Roman ideal of modesty. Cf. I, i, 252; II, i, 89.

VOLUMNIA. This is a poor epitome of yours,
Which by th' interpretation of full time
May show like all yourself.
CORIOLANUS. The god of soldiers,
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness, that thou mayst prove
To shame unvulnerable, and stick i' th' wars
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,
And saving those that eye thee!
VOLUMNIA. Your knee, sirrah.
CORIOLANUS. That 's my brave boy!
VOLUMNIA. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
Are suitors to you.
CORIOLANUS. I beseech you, peace:
Or, if you 'ld ask, remember this before:
The thing I have forsworn to grant may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics: tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not
T' allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.
VOLUMNIA. O, no more, no more!
You have said you will not grant us any thing;
For we have nothing else to ask, but that
Which you deny already: yet we will ask;

73. **stick** F_1 | strike $F_2F_3F_4$.

68. **This.** Volumnia here points to young Martius.

74. **sea-mark**: beacon. Cf. *Othello*, V, ii, 268. — **flaw**: gust.

80–81. What I have sworn not to grant cannot be held by you as personal refusals.

That, if you fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.

CORIOLANUS. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark; for we 'll
Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request?

VOLUMNIA. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life

92. "After he had thus lovingly received them, and perceiving that his mother Volumnia would begin to speak to him, he called the chiefest of the council of the Volsces to hear what she would say. Then she spake in this sort: 'If we held our peace, my son, and determined not to speak, the state of our poor bodies, and present sight of our raiment, would easily bewray to thee what life we have led at home, since thy exile and abode abroad; but think now with thyself, how much more unfortunately ['unfortunate' in the edition of 1612] than all the women living, we are come hither, considering that the sight which should be most pleasant to all other to behold, spiteful fortune had made most fearful to us: making myself to see my son, and my daughter here her husband, besieging the walls of his native country: so as that which is the only comfort to all other in their adversity and misery, to pray unto the gods and to call to them for aid, is the only thing which plungeth us into most deep perplexity. For we cannot, alas! together pray both for victory to our country and for safety of thy life also: but a world of grievous curses, yea, more than any mortal enemy can heap upon us, are forcibly wrapt up in our prayers. For the bitter sop of most hard choice is offered thy wife and children, to forego one of the two: either to lose the person of thyself, or the nurse of their native country. For myself, my son, I am determined not to tarry till fortune, in my lifetime, do make an end of this war. For if I cannot persuade thee, rather to do good unto both parties than to overthrow and destroy the one, preferring love and nature before the malice and calamity of wars, thou shalt see, my son, and trust unto it, thou shalt no sooner march forward to assault thy country, but thy foot shall tread upon thy mother's womb, that brought thee first into this world." — Plutarch.

We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither; since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow,
Making the mother, wife, and child, to see
The son, the husband, and the father, tearing
His country's bowels out; and to poor we
Thine enmity 's most capital: thou barr'st us
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
That all but we enjoy; for how can we,
Alas, how can we for our country pray,
Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,
Whereto we are bound? alack, or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win. For either thou
Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
With manacles through our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
And bear the palm for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood: for myself, son,
I purpose not to wait on fortune till
These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner

97. **all** F_1 | $F_2F_3F_4$ omit. 115. **through** Ff | thorough Johnson.

103. **to poor we.** The inflections of personal pronouns are frequently neglected or misused. See Abbott, §§ 205–216.

120. **determine**: come to a close. Cf. III, iii, 43, and see note.

March to assault thy country than to tread
(Trust to 't, thou shalt not) on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.
VIRGILIA. Ay, and mine,
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
Living to time.
BOY. A shall not tread on me:
I 'll run away till I am bigger, but then I 'll fight.
CORIOLANUS. Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see:
I have sat too long. [*Rising*]
VOLUMNIA. Nay, go not from us thus:
If it were so that our request did tend
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
As poisonous of your honour. No; our suit
Is that you reconcile them: while the Volsces
May say 'This mercy we have show'd,' the Romans,
'This we receiv'd,' and each in either side
Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, 'Be blest
For making up this peace!' Thou know'st, great son,
The end of war 's uncertain, but this certain,
That if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name
Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;
Whose chronicle thus writ: 'The man was noble,
But with his last attempt he wip'd it out,
Destroy'd his country, and his name remains

131. [*Rising*] Capell | Ff omit.

127. **A**: he. An obsolete or dialectic form, often written ''a' or 'a'.'

To the ensuing age, abhorr'd.' Speak to me, son:
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
To imitate the graces of the gods;
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' th' air,
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak?
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs? Daughter, speak you:
He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy:
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons. There 's no man in the world
More bound to 's mother, yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' th' stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy;
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
Loaden with honour. Say my request 's unjust,
And spurn me back: but if it be not so,
Thou art not honest, and the gods will plague thee,

149. **fine** Johnson | fiue F1 | five F2F3F4 | first Rowe. 152. **charge** Theobald | change Ff. 163. **cluck'd** F2F3F4 | clock'd F1.

149–153. The general idea is of Omnipotence able to rend the universe in pieces, yet satisfied to charge its thunder-engines with a bolt that splits only an oak. "For the noblest and most amiable thing... is power mixed with gentleness, the reposing, self-restraining attitude of strength. These are 'the fine strains of honour,' these are 'the graces of the gods.'" — J. R. Seeley. Cf. V, i, 18. The idea was a favorite one with Shakespeare. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, i, 195–197; *Measure for Measure*, II, ii, 107–109.

151. **wide cheeks o' th' air.** Cf. "the cloudy cheeks of heaven," *Richard II*, III, iii, 57.

162–163. "Caius Martius, . . . being left an orphan by his father, was brought up under his mother a widow." — Plutarch.

That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
To a mother's part belongs. He turns away:
Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.
To his surname Coriolanus longs more pride
Than pity to our prayers. Down: an end;
This is the last. So we will home to Rome,
And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold 's;
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny 't. Come, let us go:
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;
His wife is in Corioles, and his child
Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch:
I am hush'd until our city be afire,
And then I 'll speak a little. [*He holds her by the hand, silent*]

CORIOLANUS. O mother, mother!
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!
You have won a happy victory to Rome;
But, for your son, believe it, O, believe it,
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come:
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,

169. **him with** $F_2F_3F_4$ | him with him with F_1.

170. **longs**: belongs. An obsolete, not a contracted, form.

186–189. "And holding her hard by the right hand, 'Oh mother,' he said, 'you have won a happy victory for your country, but mortal and unhappy for your son: for I see myself vanquished by you alone.'" — Plutarch.

I 'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, would you have heard
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

AUFIDIUS. I was mov'd withal.

CORIOLANUS. I dare be sworn you were:
And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you 'll make, advise me: for my part,
I 'll not to Rome, I 'll back with you; and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause. O mother! wife!

AUFIDIUS. [*Aside*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy honour
At difference in thee: out of that I 'll work
Myself a former fortune.

CORIOLANUS. Ay, by and by;
[*To* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *&c.*]
But we will drink together; and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we
On like conditions will have counter-seal'd.

192. **stead** F_4 | steed $F_1F_2F_3$. 203. [*To* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *&c.*] Rowe | Ff omit.
200. [*Aside*] Rowe | Ff omit.

196. **Mine eyes to sweat compassion.** "And nature so wrought with him that the tears fell from his eyes, and he could not keep himself from making much of them, but yielded to the affection of his blood, as if he had been violently carried with the fury of a most swift running stream." — Plutarch.

202. Here Johnson introduced the stage direction, "The Ladies make signs to Coriolanus."

203. **drink together.** A token of peace. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, IV, ii, 62–65:

> and here, between the armies,
> Let 's drink together friendly, and embrace,
> That all their eyes may bear those tokens home,
> Of our restored love, and amity.

Come enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you: all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV. *Rome. A public place*

Enter MENENIUS *and* SICINIUS

MENENIUS. See you yond coign o' th' Capitol, yond corner-stone?

SICINIUS. Why, what of that?

MENENIUS. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say there is no hope in 't: our throats are sentenc'd, and stay upon execution.

SICINIUS. Is 't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man? 10

MENENIUS. There is difference between a grub and a

SCENE IV Pope | Scene III Rowe. 1. **yond** | yond' F_4 | yon'd $F_1F_2F_3$.
— *Rome . . . place* Capell | Ff omit. — **coign** Capell | Coin Ff.

206. **Come enter**. See note III, i, 174.

207. "Whereupon the Senate ordained that the magistrates, to gratify and honour these ladies, should grant them all that they would require. And they only requested that they would build a temple of Fortune for the women." — Plutarch. This temple, called Fortuna Muliebris, is said to have stood on the Via Latina, at the fourth milestone, where Coriolanus met his mother.

1. **coign**: corner. Cf. 'coign of vantage,' *Macbeth*, I, vi, 7.

7. **stay upon**: wait upon, wait for. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, IV, i, 46–47.

10. **condition**: disposition. Frequently so. Cf. II, iii, 93.

butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Martius is grown from man to dragon: he has wings; he 's more than a creeping thing.

SICINIUS. He lov'd his mother dearly.

MENENIUS. So did he me: and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes: when he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading. He is able to pierce a corslet with his eye, talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done, is finish'd with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity, and a heaven to throne in.

SICINIUS. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

MENENIUS. I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him: there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find: and all this is long of you.

SICINIUS. The gods be good unto us!

MENENIUS. No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banish'd him, we respected not them; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER. Sir, if you 'ld save your life, fly to your house: The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune,

19. **engine**: engine of war (such as a battering-ram).

21–22. **state**: chair of state. — **thing made for**: image made to represent.

26. **in the character**: in his true character.

29. **long of**: on account of. Still used colloquially.

And hale him up and down, all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
They 'll give him death by inches.

Enter another Messenger

SICINIUS. What 's the news?

2 MESSENGER. Good news, good news! the ladies have prevail'd,
The Volscians are dislodg'd, and Martius gone:
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

SICINIUS. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true? is 't most certain?

2 MESSENGER. As certain as I know the sun is fire:
Where have you lurk'd that you make doubt of it?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,
As the recomforted through th' gates. Why, hark you!
[*Trumpets; hautboys; drums beat; all together*]
The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,
Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting Romans,
Make the sun dance. Hark you! [*A shout within*]

MENENIUS. This is good news:
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full: of tribunes such as you,
A sea and land full: you have pray'd well to-day:
This morning, for ten thousand of your throats,
I 'ld not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!
[*Sound still, with the shouts*]

50. **Make the sun dance.** An allusion to the popular belief that the sun danced on Easter Day.

SICINIUS. First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,
Accept my thankfulness.

2 MESSENGER. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks.

SICINIUS. They are near the city?

2 MESSENGER. Almost at point to enter.

SICINIUS. We 'll meet them,
And help the joy. [*Exeunt*] 61

SCENE V. *The same. A street near the gate*

Enter two Senators *with* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, *&c. passing over the stage, followed by* Patricians, *and others*

1 SENATOR. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them:
Unshout the noise that banish'd Martius;
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother; 5
Cry 'Welcome, ladies, welcome!'

ALL. Welcome, ladies,
Welcome! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt*]

SCENE V. *The same . . . near the gate* Dyce| Ff omit.
4. **Unshout** Rowe | Unshoot Ff.
7. [. . . *Exeunt*] $F_2F_3F_4$ | F_1 omits.

1. *Enter two* . . . The stage direction of the Folios is 'Enter two Senators, with Ladies, passing ouer the Stage, with other Lords.'

2–7. "There was not a temple in the city but was presently set open, and full of men wearing garlands of flowers upon their heads, sacrificing to the gods. . . . And this common joy was yet more manifestly showed by the honourable courtesies the whole senate and people did bestow on their ladies." — Plutarch.

SCENE VI. *Corioles. A public place*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, *with* Attendants

AUFIDIUS. Go tell the lords o' th' city I am here:
Deliver them this paper: having read it,
Bid them repair to th' market-place, where I,
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath ent'red, and
Intends t' appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words: dispatch.

[*Exeunt* Attendants]

Enter three or four Conspirators *of* AUFIDIUS' *faction*

Most welcome!

1 CONSPIRATOR. How is it with our general?

AUFIDIUS. Even so
As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
And with his charity slain.

2 CONSPIRATOR. Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wish'd us parties, we 'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

SCENE VI Dyce | Scene IV Rowe | Scene V Pope. — *Corioles* | Corioli Camb | Antium Rowe Globe | Ff omit. — *A public place* Theobald | Ff omit. 8. [*Exeunt* Attendants] Malone | Ff omit.

1–5. "Tullus, having procured many other of his confederacy, required Martius might be deposed from his estate, to render up account to the Volsces of his charge and government." — Plutarch.

5. **Him**: he whom. The antecedent is attracted into the case which the omitted relative would have had. See Abbott, § 246.

AUFIDIUS. Sir, I cannot tell:
We must proceed as we do find the people.

3 CONSPIRATOR. The people will remain uncertain while
'Twixt you there 's difference; but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

AUFIDIUS. I know it,
And my pretext to strike at him admits
A good construction. I rais'd him, and I pawn'd
Mine honour for his truth: who being so heighten'd,
He watered his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,
He bow'd his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable, and free.

3 CONSPIRATOR. Sir, his stoutness
When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping —

AUFIDIUS. That I would have spoke of:
Being banish'd for 't, he came unto my hearth;
Presented to my knife his throat: I took him,
Made him joint-servant with me, gave him way
In all his own desires, nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
My best and freshest men, serv'd his designments
In mine own person, holp to reap the fame
Which he did end all his; and took some pride
To do myself this wrong: till at the last
I seem'd his follower, not partner, and

29. **stooping** — | stooping. Ff. 36. **holp** F1 | **hope** F2.

37. **end**: gather in, harvest. The meaning is, that Coriolanus had managed to appropriate for his own exclusive use the whole harvest of renown which Aufidius had helped to gather and prepare.

He wag'd me with his countenance, as if
I had been mercenary.

1 CONSPIRATOR. So he did, my lord:
The army marvell'd at it, and in the last,
When he had carried Rome and that we look'd
For no less spoil than glory —

AUFIDIUS. There was it:
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour
Of our great action; therefore shall he die,
And I 'll renew me in his fall. But hark!

[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people*]

1 CONSPIRATOR. Your native town you enter'd like a post,
And had no welcomes home; but he returns,
Splitting the air with noise.

2 CONSPIRATOR. And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory.

3 CONSPIRATOR. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people

40. wag'd F_3F_4 | wadg'd F_1F_2. 44. glory — F_3F_4 | Glory. F_1F_2.

40. **wag'd me**: paid me wages, treated me as a dependent.

46. **rheum**: tears. Cf. *Much Ado About Nothing*, V, ii, 85.

50. **like a post**: as if he had been a common messenger.

54–56. **vantage . . . sword.** "Tullus . . . thinking, if he let slip that present time, he should never recover the like and fit occasion again . . . fearing that, if he did let him speak, he would prove his innocency to the people, because amongst other things he had an eloquent tongue; besides that the first good service he had done to the people of the Volsces did win him more favour than these last accusations could purchase him displeasure." — Plutarch.

With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounc'd shall bury
His reasons with his body.

AUFIDIUS. Say no more:
Here come the lords.

Enter the Lords *of the city*

ALL THE LORDS. You are most welcome home.

AUFIDIUS. I have not deserv'd it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused
What I have written to you?

LORDS. We have.

1 LORD. And grieve to hear 't:
What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines: but there to end
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding: this admits no excuse.

AUFIDIUS. He approaches: you shall hear him.

Enter CORIOLANUS, *marching with drum and colours; the* Commoners *being with him*

CORIOLANUS. Hail, lords! I am return'd your soldier;

57. **we will** F_1F_4 | he will F_2F_3. 71. Scene VI Pope.

58. **your . . . pronounc'd**: your version of his conduct.

67–68. **answering us With our own charge**: rendering us no other account than the costs of the war.

71. **Hail, lords.** "The people hereupon called a common council, in which assembly there were certain orators appointed that stirred

No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know,
That prosperously I have attempted, and
With bloody passage led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Doth more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We have made peace,
With no less honour to the Antiates
Than shame to th' Romans. And we here deliver,
Subscrib'd by th' consuls and patricians,
Together with the seal o' th' senate, what
We have compounded on.

AUFIDIUS. Read it not, noble lords;
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree
He hath abus'd your powers.

CORIOLANUS. Traitor? how now?

AUFIDIUS. Ay, traitor, Martius.

CORIOLANUS. Martius?

AUFIDIUS. Ay, Martius, Caius Martius: dost thou think
I 'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
Coriolanus, in Corioles?
You lords and heads o' th' state, perfidiously
He has betray'd your business, and given up,

78. Doth Ff | Do Pope. 91. heads F_1F_2 | head F_3F_4.

up the common people against him: and when they had told their tales, Martius rose up to make them answer. Now, notwithstanding the mutinous people made a marvellous great noise, yet when they saw him, for the reverence they bare unto his valiantness, they quieted themselves, and gave him audience to allege with leisure what he could for his purgation." — Plutarch.

For certain drops of salt, your city Rome;
I say 'your city,' to his wife and mother,
Breaking his oath and resolution, like
A twist of rotten silk, never admitting
Counsel o' th' war: but at his nurse's tears
He whin'd and roar'd away your victory,
That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
Look'd wondering each at others.

CORIOLANUS. Hear'st thou, Mars?

AUFIDIUS. Name not the god, thou boy of tears.

CORIOLANUS. Ha?

AUFIDIUS. No more.

CORIOLANUS. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it. 'Boy!' O slave!
Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever
I was forc'd to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
Must give this cur the lie: and his own notion
(Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him, that
Must bear my beating to his grave) shall join
To thrust the lie unto him.

1 LORD. Peace, both, and hear me speak.

CORIOLANUS. Cut me to pieces, Volsces; men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me. 'Boy!' false hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I

100. others Ff | other Rowe Globe Camb Delius. 106. scold Rowe | scoul'd F_1F_2 | scould F_3F_4.

102. **No more**: you are no better than a boy of tears.

104. **'Boy!'** "The false interpretations put upon Coriolanus restore much of our sympathy to him." — Chambers.

107. **notion**: understanding. Its only meaning in Shakespeare.

Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioles;
Alone I did it. 'Boy!'

AUFIDIUS. Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
Fore your own eyes and ears?

ALL CONSPIRATORS. Let him die for 't.

ALL THE PEOPLE. 'Tear him to pieces!' 'Do it presently!' 'He kill'd my son!' 'My daughter!' 'He kill'd my cousin Marcus!' 'He kill'd my father!'

2 LORD. Peace, ho! no outrage; peace!
The man is noble, and his fame folds in
This orb o' th' earth. His last offences to us
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.

CORIOLANUS. O, that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
To use my lawful sword!

AUFIDIUS. Insolent villain!

ALL CONSPIRATORS. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

[*Both the* Conspirators *draw, and kill* CORIOLANUS, *who falls.* AUFIDIUS *stands on him*]

LORDS. Hold, hold, hold, hold!

116. **Flutter'd** F_3F_4 | Flatter'd F_1F_2.

125–126. **folds in . . . earth**: extends beyond and around the world.

127. **judicious**: judicial, impartial. Cf. *King Lear*, III, iv, 76.

131. "Those that were of the conspiracy began to cry out that he was not to be heard, and that they would not suffer a traitor to usurp tyrannical power over the tribe of the Volsces, who would not yield up his state and authority. And in saying these words, they all fell upon him, and killed him in the market-place, none of the people once offering to rescue him." — Plutarch.

AUFIDIUS. My noble masters, hear me speak.
1 LORD. O Tullus!
2 LORD. Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will weep.
3 LORD. Tread not upon him. Masters all, be quiet;
Put up your swords.
AUFIDIUS. My lords, when you shall know (as in this rage,
Provok'd by him, you cannot) the great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you 'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours
To call me to your senate, I 'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.
1 LORD. Bear from hence his body,
And mourn you for him. Let him be regarded
As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.
2 LORD. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame:
Let 's make the best of it.
AUFIDIUS. My rage is gone,
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up:
Help, three o' th' chiefest soldiers; I 'll be one.
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully:
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he

138. **owe you**: possess for you, have in reserve for you. This meaning survives in the expression 'owe a grudge.'

142–145. **Bear . . . his urn.** "Howbeit it is a clear case, that this murder was not generally consented unto of the most part of the Volsces: for men came out of all parts to honour his body, and did honourably bury him; setting out his tomb with great store of armour and spoils, as the tomb of a worthy person and great captain." — Plutarch.

Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.
Assist. [*Exeunt, bearing the body of* CORIOLANUS. *A dead march sounded*] 155

155. [*Exeunt* . . . CORIOLANUS . . .] Exeunt . . . Martius . . . Ff.

155. "Now Martius being dead, the whole state of the Volsces heartily wished him alive again. For, first of all, they fell out with the Æques (who were their friends and confederates) touching preeminence and place: and this quarrel grew on so far between them, that frays and murders fell out upon it one with another. After that, the Romans overcame them in battle, in which Tullus was slain in the field, and the flower of all their force was put to the sword: so that they were compelled to accept most shameful conditions of peace, in yielding themselves subject unto the conquerors, and promising to be obedient at their commandment." — Plutarch.

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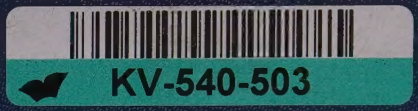
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